

Rhône-Alpes^{Région}

LA CITOYENNE



**WELCOME
TO RHÔNE-ALPES**



Discover Rhône-Alpes

The second highest-ranked region in France, the Rhône-Alpes region accounts for 10% of the national population in 2,879 communes and 8 administrative départements (or counties): Ain, Ardèche, Drôme, Isère, Loire, Rhône, Savoie and Haute-Savoie. This dimension places it amongst Europe's ten largest regions!



Rhône-Alpes reconciles effective transport infrastructures (top photo: TGV station at Lyon Saint-Exupéry airport) and an exceptional living space (bottom photo: Montbrun-les-Bains, Drôme).

European scale

Covering 45,000 km² the territory of Rhône-Alpes is the equivalent of Switzerland, the Netherlands or Belgium in surface area. **Its population of 5.8 million*** also makes it comparable with Denmark and Finland.

Bordering highly industrialised countries and regions like Switzerland and Northern Italy, Rhône-Alpes enjoys a strategic position in Europe, reinforced by the international airport of Lyon-Saint Exupéry and the Lyon-Turin rail project.

Additionally, Rhône-Alpes has a GDP 3.5 times higher than the average GDP of European regions.

A balanced space

Rhône-Alpes features a dense urban framework organised around a real network of cities; Lyon, the capital of Rhône-Alpes, has a population of 1,648,000 and is the second largest metropolitan district in France. In addition the region includes two urban centres with over 300,000 inhabitants – Grenoble and Saint-Étienne.

These major cities are surrounded by medium-sized towns and cities, forming a particularly dynamic economic network with communication routes that enable rapid internal and external links.

This urban environment is balanced by exceptional natural spaces, including Mont-Blanc and the Rhône Valley, which make a huge contribution to the living space. Altogether, Rhône-Alpes has six Regional Nature Parks (Vercors, Pilat, Massif des Bauges, Char-

treuse, Monts d'Ardèche, Haut-Jura), which represent half of the listed natural spaces in France. In addition to these our region has two National Parks (Écrins and Vanoise) and thirty nature reserves.

Efficient transport

An infrastructure of transport networks links the major urban centres in Rhône-Alpes to each other, as well as to major European cities. The network consists of:

- functional **rail links**: based on a TER (regional express transport) network joining the principal towns and cities of Rhône-Alpes, a TGV (high-speed train) crossroads on a European scale and the perspective of the Lyon-Turin transalpine link;
- a major **road network**: with 3,000 km of roads and 1,000 km of motorways, Rhône-Alpes is the leading French region in terms of the quality and the coverage of its road network;
- an efficient **air network**: Lyon-Saint Exupéry airport is linked to a TGV station, offering a faster and complementary service;
- an **inland waterway system**: the Rhône river enables exchanges between the North and the South of the region.

*Source: latest INSEE projection

The Region, a territorial community

While, first and foremost, the Region is a territory, it also represents a political and administrative entity.

How the Region functions

The Region is made up of two assemblies:

1. The **Regional Council** is an assembly elected by universal suffrage for a six-year term. It consists of regional councillors, a President and several Vice-Presidents.
2. The **CESR** (Regional Social and Economic Council) is a consultative assembly bringing together personalities from the socio-professional world.

In our territory, consisting of 8 administrative *départements* (or *counties*), the Region **exercises its competence in the following fields**: construction and equipment of *lycées* (high schools), professional training and apprenticeships, economic development and employment, territorial development, regional public transport, etc.

The other French political entities

. **The State** guarantees national sovereignty. Principally, it assumes the public service missions relating to teaching, justice, the maintenance of public order and defence, the national economy and social protection, the organisation and equipment of the territory (motorways, ports, etc.), culture and foreign relations.

The President of the French Republic and the members of the Government are responsible for the State.

. Much like the Region, the *Département* (or *County*) and the *Commune* (or *Municipality*) are local authorities which govern freely through the elected councils.

The **Département** builds and maintains the *collèges* (junior high schools). The responsibilities of the *Département* also cover social and sanitary action, school transport, the departmental highways network, etc.

The **Commune** is in charge of primary schools and nursery schools, local services, urban planning, communal heritage, the Municipal police, etc.



The lycées and regional public transport are part of the Region's major fields of competence.



The Region and Europe

Rhône-Alpes Region opened a delegation in Brussels in 1990. Its mission is to promote the Region's interests to the European institutions and to supply the socio-economic players in Rhône-Alpes with information concerning European policies and programmes.

A major centre of higher education and research

The second highest-ranked French region in terms of research, and fifth highest-ranked in Europe, Rhône-Alpes has a high concentration of brain-power. This position is reinforced by the presence of more than 230,000 students taking courses in the universities and 'grandes écoles' of Rhône-Alpes.



Four principle districts of higher education and research

There are four principle districts of Lyon, Grenoble, Saint-Étienne and Chambéry/Annecy. Along with these districts, there are university branches scattered throughout the medium-sized cities in the region, such as Roanne, Valence, Bourg-en-Bresse, l'Isle d'Abeau and Vienne. Rhône-Alpes is the second highest-ranked French region in terms of its student population. However, the region's potential isn't defined by this position alone; it also lies in the number and diversity of the higher education establishments within the region and the training courses they offer. With Universities and University Institutes of Teacher Training, ENS 'Grandes Ecoles' specialised in teacher training, National Engineering Colleges, 'Grandes Ecoles' for Business Studies, Schools of Architecture and other specialised schools, the region boasts over forty high level establishments, which contribute to the potential of Rhône-Alpes.

600 research laboratories

Major international laboratories contribute to the excellence of the well renowned region in the field of research: CERN (European Nuclear Research Centre), ESRF (European Synchrotron Radiation Facility), CIRC (international cancer research centre), etc. Alongside these, there are also many research laboratories, including the CNRS (national scientific research centre), the CEA (atomic energy commission), INSERM (national institute of health and medical research), etc.

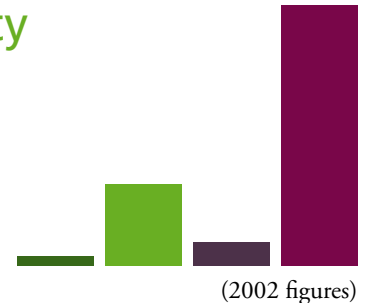


Key figures

- More than **230,000** students
- **9** universities and more than **40** 'grandes écoles'
- **28,000** permanent researchers
- **1,561** patents registered
- **600** research laboratories

Jobs per sector of activity

- Services: 69.5%
- Industry: 21.7%
- Construction, civil and agricultural engineering: 6.2%
- Agriculture: 2.6%



Encouraging exchanges

The driving force in economic development, the Rhône-Alpes Region wants to unite the players and mutualise competences. The objective is to **reinforce the cross-over between research and companies**. In this context, Rhône-Alpes initiated a Regional Schema of higher education and research and the creation of the Regional Agency of Innovation and Development.

International openness is particularly developed in this region: nearly 10% of students spend part of their courses abroad, specifically thanks to regional aid schemes. Moreover, the network of partnerships that the Rhône-Alpes Region has forged with many regions in the world has often grown from university exchanges and co-operation between researchers.

Traditional industry meets cutting-edge industry

The complementary nature of universities, research centres, major groups and small to medium businesses forms a scientific and technological environment that allows Rhône-Alpes to develop in the heart of Europe.

The birthplace of a long industrial tradition, Rhône-Alpes, which accounts for 12.3% of the French industrial GDP, relies both on traditional industries and cutting-edge industries. Rhône-Alpes is the leader in the French **metals industry, mechanical construction, the chemical industry and plastic transformation**. Rhône-Alpes also plays an important role in the fields of textiles and garments, electrical and electronic construction, as well as the pharmaceutical and health industries. Today, Rhône-Alpes is also outstanding in the international scene for its competence in the innovative fields of biotechnology and nanotechnology, the environment and energy management.

France's second exporting region, Rhône-Alpes is home to internationally renowned groups: Aventis, Elf Atochem, Seb, Renault Trucks, Alcatel, Alstom, Danone, Mérieux, Plastic Omnium, Bayer Cropscience, Atari...

Finally, with nearly **900 foreign companies** with more than 50 employees, Rhône-Alpes plays a large role in making France an attractive country for foreign companies.



An essential element in our environment, **ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)** affect every field of activity of the citizens, companies, research and development centres and universities of Rhône-Alpes. The Region is strongly committed to actions developing ICT, whether through the organisation of the Amplivia broadband service or by supporting numerous operations in the fields of research, training, tourism, business activity, etc.

From agriculture to industry: nature in harmony

Rhône-Alpes enjoys a privileged geographical location. From the Alps to the Massif Central, from Bresse to the Rhône Valley, it is a land of contrasts, rich in quality agricultural products, as can be seen in its many labels.

Rhône-Alpes is also the second largest forestry region in France, as well as the country's leading electricity producer.

In Rhône-Alpes, 75% of the territory is occupied by agricultural land and forests. This high proportion of cultivated areas is reflected in a great diversity of **crop production**: cereals and oil-producing plants, vineyards, peaches and apricots, horticulture, tomatoes and salad vegetables, deciduous and spruce forests; and animal production: from cattle to poultry and not forgetting egg production and goat's milk.

In fact, nearly all of the foodstuffs produced in France can be found in Rhône-Alpes.

Enhancing our territories

Highly efficient farm-produce industries add value to the very productive agriculture of Rhône-Alpes, which is a breeding-ground for innovation in many fields:

- the **dairy product industry**, Rhône-Alpes is the leading French region for fresh products;
- the **meat industry** represents 28% of the region's food industry, particularly in the meat salting industry;

- the **wine-making industry** is particularly developed, with 40,000 hectares of vineyards that enhance the various soils;

- **fruit production**, where Rhône-Alpes is the leader in apricots, strawberries, walnuts, chestnuts and red currants;

- and, finally, the **mineral water sector**, as Rhône-Alpes produces over fifteen mineral waters, including Évian and Badoit.

Reconciling economic development and the environment

Set at the crossroads of contrasting climatic influences (Mediterranean, continental and Alpine climats), the Rhône-Alpes region enjoys a **rich and diversified biological and landscape heritage**, which represents a powerful argument for summer and winter tourism. The natural spaces (mountains, forests, wet zones) account for 57% of the territory and parts of them are protected zones. Rhône-Alpes has 2 National Parks, 6 Regional Nature Parks and 30 Nature Reserves.

This exemplifies that reconciling economic development, innovation and protection of the environment is a major ambition of Rhône-Alpes Region, in charge of solidarity-based development of people and territories. As the leader in the field of economic development, Rhône-Alpes supports the territorial authorities and the socio-economic players who develop **policies of preserving natural resources and fighting pollution**: restoration of the quality of aquatic environments, prevention and innovation to limit and recover and upgrade wastes, planning and developing energy management and the use of renewable energy, preservation of the diversity of plant and animal species and of natural environments, risk prevention and air quality monitoring, ensuring small and medium businesses take into account their impact on the environment, creating jobs in the field of the environment and raising public awareness.

Key figures

- **1,800,000** hectares of agricultural land in use
- **85,000** jobs in agriculture





Living in Rhône-Alpes

With the high-mountain zone culminating with the snowy peak of Mont-Blanc, lakeside towns and cities like Annecy, and the cultural heritage of Lyon, Rhône-Alpes has a rich and exceptionally diverse natural and cultural heritage.

This rich heritage allows the development of major tourist activity, offering adapted structures, both for business tourism and discovery or leisure tourism.

Culture to the forefront

From pre-history to contemporary art, and not forgetting Gallo-Roman remains and the Renaissance, the sites, monuments and religious architecture of Rhône-Alpes are an eloquent testimony to the region's tradition of exchanges.

Various heritage trails have been developed in the region, like the Baroque routes in Savoie or the Silk Trail, reflecting a distinct cultural identity.

The **carefully preserved heritage** is revealed in the region's **300 museums**, including the Beaux-Arts museum of Lyon. But art is also very present in its most contemporary forms.

The birthplace of the film industry, Rhône-Alpes is home to the Institut Lumière and reinforces the region's notoriety through the many films made in its territory. The presence of film professionals, such as the staff of the Rhône-Alpes Cinéma company, means that around 15 full-length films are made in the region every year. In order to enrich this sector, Rhône-Alpes supports all aspects of the film and audio-visual industries through its support policy for the image sector. Every year, there are around fifty film festivals in Rhône-Alpes.

The bustle of creative activity

A multitude of cultural events take place in Rhône-Alpes: the Biennial Dance Festival and the Biennial Contemporary Art Show in Lyon, the Jazz Festival in Vienne, the Ambro-nay Festival and many more. Altogether, the region hosts **350 festivals every year**.

The region's theatres and other cultural showcases play host to many regional, national and international artistes. Created at Lyon Opera, Prokofiev's ballets *Cendrillon (Cinderella)* and *Roméo et Juliette*, as well as Philippe Decoufflé's *Tricodex*, have gone on to feature in world tours.

A great region for sport

Rhône-Alpes offers ideal natural surroundings for sports activities, whether in the field of leisure or competition, with nearly **170 ski resorts**.

In the public recognition rankings, three events top the list: the Olympic Games, the football World Cup and the Tour de France. The Rhône-Alpes Region has hosted all three – the Olympics, in Chamonix in 1924, Grenoble in 1968 and in Albertville in 1992; the football World Cup, in Lyon and St-Étienne in 1998, and the Tour de France... every year! Our region boasts many other sports events – skiing world cup events, world cycling, canoe-kayaking, rowing, cross-country and mountain bike championships, to mention just a few.

As an additional note, Val d'Isère has been chosen to host the skiing world championships in 2009.

A land of many pleasures

The region's 40 *grands crus* (Beaujolais, Côtes-du-Rhône, Vin de Savoie or Chartreuse...) and 80 cheeses make it a **gastronomic centre**, served by the greatest, internationally-renowned Chefs (Bocuse, Blanc, Pic, Troisgros...). While Évian, the world's number one still mine-

ral water, and Badoit, the number one sparkling mineral water, are undoubtedly the region's stars, there are also a host of other famous brands: the waters of Thonon and Aix-les-Bains, the Parot springs in Saint-Romain-le-Puy, the waters of Saint-Alban, Sail-sous-Couzan and Montarcher, as well as the carbonated waters of Neyrac, Arcens and Vals.

France's 2nd largest region for tourism

152 million tourist bed nights in 2004

· Purpose built structures

- **2,428** tourism class hotels

- Lyon-Saint Exupéry international airport and **5** regional airports

- **1,000** km of motorway

- Major TGV (high speed train) stations:

Lyon Part-Dieu, Lyon Perrache, Lyon-Saint Exupéry, Valence, Grenoble, Annecy, Chambéry, Bourg-Saint-Maurice, Moutiers, Albertville

- **16** conference and convention centers host seminars, symposiums and events

Rhône-Alpes: open to the world

The Rhône-Alpes Region has chosen to expand itself on an international scale. With the tradition of openness and economic and cultural vitality, favoured by its geographical position, the Rhône-Alpes Region has launched several privileged co-operation programmes with many regions throughout the world.

The Rhône-Alpes humanist vocation and international expertise also facilitate the development of specific solidarity programmes.

Through an ambitious **policy of international openness**, the Region pursues three complementary objectives:

- encouraging the inhabitants of Rhône-Alpes (students, company executives, researchers, artists, etc.) to open up and expand on an international level;
- making the territory more attractive so that the region becomes a driving force within the European Union;
- helping to reduce the world economic divide by accompanying less privileged regions in their regional development projects.

In line with the Rio and Johannesburg international protocols, the Region intends to make its own contribution towards fairer planetary development and **devote 0.7% of its budget to development aid and international solidarity by 2010.**

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Creating long-standing ties

In Europe the ambition of Rhône-Alpes Region is reflected in the close cross-border relationships, both with Switzerland, particularly in the *Comité Régional Franco-Genevois*, and with the Rhône-Alpes' neighbours in Piedmont and the Aosta Valley.

The Rhône-Alpes Region also plays an active role in the work of the "**Four Motors For Europe**", alongside our partners from Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Catalonia (Spain) and Lombardy (Italy).

We have also embarked on sustained relationships with regions in Poland (Malopolska) and Hungary (Transdanubia); and additionally, our region is a member of numerous European institutions and associations (Committee of the Regions, Assembly of European Regions, Council of European Municipalities and Regions, etc.).

In North America (Quebec, Ontario and Pennsylvania), South America (the States of Parana in Brazil and Cordoba in Argentina), China (Municipality of Shanghai) and India (State of Karnataka), the Rhône-Alpes Region helps our citizens to build up their networks of co-operation.

In regards to the Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone, the Region is active in Algeria (Wilayas of Sétif and Annaba), Tunisia (Gouvernorat de Monastir), Morocco (Rabat Region) and the Lebanon (Tripoli Region). This spread of influence is accompanied by specific solidarity actions in Africa (Mali,



A view of Lyon.

Senegal, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, South Africa, etc.) and in South-East Asia (Vietnam, Laos, etc.).

Facilitating exchanges

In addition, the Rhône-Alpes Region has set up **thematic and geographic programmes** intended to encourage universities, students and researchers to initiate exchanges with their counterparts all over the world.

In the economic field, the Region enables company executives to gain a foothold in important markets, in Europe, in America and in Asia, thanks to the support provided to *Entreprise Rhône-Alpes International (ERAI)*.

The Rhône-Alpes Region is a member of *AIRF* (International association of French-speaking regions), of which it has been president since the association was founded in 2002.