

## Offering Circular dated 10 October 2024

THIS DOCUMENT IS A FREE TRANSLATION OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE "DOCUMENT D'INFORMATION" DATED 10 OCTOBER 2024 PREPARED BY THE DÉPARTEMENT DES BOUCHES-DU-RHÔNE. IN THE EVENT OF ANY AMBIGUITY OR CONFLICT BETWEEN CORRESPONDING STATEMENTS OR OTHER ITEMS CONTAINED IN THESE DOCUMENTS, THE RELEVANT STATEMENTS OR ITEMS OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE "DOCUMENT D'INFORMATION" SHALL PREVAIL.



**Département des Bouches-du-Rhône**  
**Euro Medium Term Note Programme**  
**€1,000,000,000**

The *Département des Bouches-du-Rhône* (the **Issuer** or the **Département des Bouches-du-Rhône**) may, at any time, under the Euro Medium Term Note Programme (the **Programme**) which is subject to the present offering circular (the **Offering Circular**) and in compliance with applicable legislations, regulations and directives, issue debt notes (the **Notes**). The aggregate nominal amount of Notes outstanding shall not, at any time, exceed Euro 1,000,000,000.

Application may, under certain circumstances be made for Notes to be admitted to trading on the regulated market of Euronext Paris (**Euronext Paris**). Euronext Paris is a regulated market as defined in Directive 2014/65/EU dated 15 May 2014 as amended (a **Regulated Market**). Notes may also be admitted to trading on another Regulated Market of a member State of the European Economic Area (**EEA**) or on a non-regulated market or not admitted to trading on any market. The pricing supplement prepared for an issue of Notes (the **Pricing Supplement**), based on the form set out in the Offering Circular, shall specify whether or not such Notes shall be admitted to trading on a regulated market and shall list, if applicable, the relevant Regulated Market(s). The Notes shall only be offered to qualified investors as defined in Article L.411-2 of the French *Code monétaire et financier* in one or more member States of the EEA. This Offering Circular does not constitute a base prospectus within the meaning of Regulation (EU) 2017/1129 as amended whose provisions do not apply to the Issuer and therefore it has not been approved by the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers* (**AMF**). The Issuer undertakes to update the Offering Circular annually.

The Notes shall be in a unitary denomination equal to or greater than 100,000 euros or any other greater amount as may be permitted or required by the relevant competent authority or under any laws or regulations applicable to the Specified Currency.

The Notes may be issued in dematerialised form (**Dematerialised Notes**) or materialised form (**Materialised Notes**), as more fully described in the Offering Circular.

Dematerialised Notes will be entered in an account in accordance with articles L. 211-3 *et seq.* of the French *Code monétaire et financier*. No physical document of title shall be issued in respect of Dematerialised Notes. Dematerialised Notes may be issued, at the option of the Issuer, either (a) in bearer form, inscribed on their issue date in the books of Euroclear France (acting as central depository), which shall credit the accounts of the Account Holders (as defined in "Terms and Conditions of the Notes - Form, denomination and title") including Euroclear Bank SA/NV (Euroclear) and the depository bank for Clearstream Banking SA (Clearstream) or (b) in registered form and, in such case, at the option of the relevant Noteholder (as defined in "Terms and Conditions of the Notes - Form, denomination and title"), either in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*), in which case they shall be entered in an account maintained by the Issuer or any registration agent (as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement) on behalf of the Issuer, or in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*), in which case they shall be entered in the accounts of the Account Holder nominated by the relevant Noteholder.

Materialised Notes shall be issued in bearer form only and may only be issued outside France. A temporary global certificate in bearer form without interest coupons attached (**Temporary Global Certificate**) shall be issued initially in respect of the Materialised Notes. Such Temporary Global Certificate shall subsequently be exchanged for Materialised Notes represented by physical notes (**Physical Notes**) together with, if applicable,

interest coupons, on a date falling at the earliest approximately 40 calendar days after the issue date of the Notes (unless postponed, as described in the section "Temporary Global Certificates in respect of Materialised Notes") upon certification that the Notes are not being held by U.S. Persons in accordance with U.S. Treasury regulations, as more fully described in the Offering Circular. The Temporary Global Certificates shall be deposited (a) in the case of a Tranche (as defined in the section "General Description of the Programme") intended to be cleared through Euroclear and/or Clearstream, on the issue date with a common depository on behalf of Euroclear and Clearstream, or (b) in the case of a Tranche intended to be cleared through a clearing system other than, or in addition to, Euroclear and/or Clearstream or delivered outside any clearing system, in the manner agreed between the Issuer and the relevant Dealer (as defined below).

The Issuer has been attributed an AA- rating, negative outlook by Fitch Ratings Ireland Limited. (**Fitch**). The Programme has been attributed an AA- rating by Fitch. Notes issued under the Programme may or may not be attributed a rating. The rating attributed to the Notes, if any, shall be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. The rating of the Notes may not necessarily be the same as that of the Programme. A rating is not a recommendation to buy, sell or hold Notes and may be suspended, amended or withdrawn at any time without notice by the relevant rating agency. On the date of the Offering Circular, Fitch is a rating agency established in the European Union and registered in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1060/2009 of the European Parliament and Council of 16 September 2009 relating to credit rating agencies as amended (the CRA Regulation) and is included on the list of rating agencies published on the European Securities and Markets Authority (**ESMA**) website (<https://www.esma.europa.eu/credit-rating-agencies/cra-authorisation>) in accordance with the CRA Regulation.

**Potential investors should be aware of the risks described in the section "Risk factors" before making any decision to invest in Notes issued under this Programme.**

The Offering Circular, any supplement thereto, the documents incorporated by reference in this Offering Circular and, so long as any Notes are admitted to trading on a Regulated Market, the applicable Pricing Supplement shall be published on the dedicated page of the Issuer's website (<https://www.departement13.fr/le-13/institution/le-budget/lemprunt-obligataire/>).

**Arranger**

**HSBC**

**Dealers**

**CRÉDIT AGRICOLE CIB**

**CRÉDIT MUTUEL ARKÉA**

**HSBC**

**NATIXIS**

Each Tranche (as defined in "General Description of the Programme") of Notes shall be issued in accordance with the provisions set forth in the "Terms and Conditions of the Notes" of this Offering Circular, as completed by the provisions of the applicable Pricing Supplement agreed between the Issuer and the relevant Dealers (as defined in "General Description of the Programme") at the time of issue of such Tranche.

The Issuer accepts responsibility for the information contained or incorporated by reference in this Offering Circular. As far as the Issuer is aware, having taken all reasonable measures to ensure that such is the case, the information contained or incorporated in this Offering Circular is factually accurate and no information likely to affect its import has been omitted. The Issuer confirms that all statements of intention or opinion contained in this Offering Circular with regard to it are honestly made or held and have been reached after considering all relevant circumstances and have been based on reasonable assumptions. The Issuer confirms that there are no other facts or matters in relation to the Issuer or the Notes the omission of which would make any statement or information in this Offering Circular misleading in any respect whatsoever.

In connection with the issue or sale of any Notes, no person has been authorised to provide any information or make any representation other than as set forth or incorporated by reference in this Offering Circular. Otherwise, no such information or representation may be treated as having been authorised by the Issuer, the Arranger or any of the Dealers. Neither the delivery of this Offering Circular nor any sale made on the basis of this document shall imply that there has been no adverse change in the situation, in particular the financial situation, of the Issuer since the date of this document or since the date of the most recent supplement to this Offering Circular, or that any other information provided in connection with this Programme is accurate on any date subsequent to the date on which it was provided or, if different, the date indicated on the document containing such information.

The distribution of this Offering Circular and the offering or sale of any Notes may be restricted by law in certain countries.

Potential investors are invited to refer to the section "Subscription and Sale" of this Offering Circular, which contains a description of certain restrictions applicable to the offering, sale and transfer of Notes and distribution of this Offering Circular.

**MIFID II PRODUCT GOVERNANCE / TARGET MARKET – eligible counterparties and professional clients only** - The Pricing Supplement in respect of each series of Notes will include a section entitled "MiFID II Product Governance/Target Market: eligible counterparties and professional clients only" which will outline the target market assessment in respect of the Notes, taking into account the 5 categories referred to in point 19 of the Guidelines published by ESMA on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023, and which channels for distribution of the Notes are appropriate. Any person subsequently offering, selling or recommending the Notes (a distributor) should take the target market assessment into consideration; however, a distributor subject to Directive 2014/65/EU (as amended, MiFID II) is responsible for undertaking its own target market assessment in respect of the Notes (by either adopting or refining the target market assessment) and determining the appropriate distribution channels.

A determination will be made in relation to each issue as to whether, for the purposes of the product governance rules under Delegated Directive (EU) 2017/593 (the MiFID Product Governance Rules), any Dealer subscribing for any Notes should be considered as the manufacturer of such Notes, failing which neither the Arranger, nor the Dealers, nor any of their respective affiliates shall be a manufacturer for the purposes of the MiFID Product Governance Rules.

**UNITED KINGDOM MiFIR PRODUCT GOVERNANCE / TARGET MARKET – eligible counterparties and professional clients only - The Pricing Supplement in respect of each series of Notes may include a section entitled "United Kingdom MiFIR Product Governance/Target Market: eligible counterparties and professional clients only" which will outline the target market assessment in respect of the Notes, and which channels for distribution of the Notes are appropriate. Any person subsequently offering, selling or recommending the Notes (a distributor) should take that target market assessment into consideration; however, a distributor bound by the United Kingdom Financial Conduct Authority's *FCA Handbook - Product Intervention and Product Governance Sourcebook* (the *United Kingdom MiFIR Product Governance Rules*) is responsible for undertaking its own target market assessment in respect of the Notes (by either adopting or refining the target market assessment) and determining the appropriate distribution channels.**

**A determination will be made in relation to each issue as to whether, for the purposes of the United Kingdom MiFIR Product Governance Rules, any Dealer subscribing for any Notes should be considered as the manufacturer of such Notes, failing which neither the Arranger, nor the Dealers, nor any of their respective affiliates shall be a manufacturer for the purposes of the United Kingdom MiFIR Product Governance Rules.**

**This Offering Circular constitutes neither an invitation nor an offer by or on behalf of the Issuer, the Dealers or the Arranger to subscribe for or purchase Notes.**

**Prospective purchasers and sellers of Notes should be aware that it is possible that they may have to pay duties, taxes or fees under applicable laws or customary practices in force in the jurisdictions where the Notes are transferred or in other jurisdictions. In certain jurisdictions, no official position of the tax authorities nor any judicial decision exists pertaining to the tax treatment applicable to securities such as the Notes. Prospective investors are invited not to rely on the tax information contained in this Offering Circular but to consult with their own tax advisors having regard to their individual circumstances as regards the purchasing, holding, remuneration, sale and redemption of the Notes. Only their adviser is in a position to properly take into consideration the particular circumstances of any prospective investor.**

**Neither the Dealers nor the Issuer makes any representation to any prospective investor in the Notes as to the lawfulness of their investment under applicable laws. Any prospective investor in the Notes must be capable of assuming the economic risks that its investment in the Notes implies for an unlimited period of time.**

**Neither the Arranger nor any of the Dealers has verified the information contained in this Offering Circular. Neither the Arranger nor any of the Dealers makes any express or implied representation, or accepts any liability, as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in this Offering Circular. The Offering Circular is not intended to provide the basis of any credit or other evaluation and must not be treated as a recommendation by the Issuer, the Arranger or any of the Dealers to any recipients of this Offering Circular to buy Notes. Each prospective investor in Notes must make his own assessment of the relevance of the information contained in this Offering Circular and his decision to purchase Notes must be based on such research as he considers necessary. Neither the Arranger nor any of the Dealers undertake to review the financial situation or the overall situation of the Issuer during the life of this Offering Circular, nor undertake to pass on to any investor or prospective investor any information of which they become aware.**

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## **RISK FACTORS**

*The Issuer believes that the risk factors described below are material to any decision whether or not to invest in the Notes and/or may affect its ability to fulfil its obligations to investors under the Notes. Those risks are unpredictable and the Issuer cannot comment on their potential occurrence.*

*The Issuer believes that the risk factors described below represent the main risks associated with Notes issued under the Programme, but they are not however exhaustive. The order in which the risk factors are presented below is not an indication of how likely they are to occur. The risks described below are not the only risks to which an investor in the Notes is exposed. Other risks and uncertainties, unknown to the Issuer at today's date or which it does not consider as at the date of this Offering Circular to be material, may have a material impact on an investment in the Notes. Prospective investors should also read the detailed information appearing elsewhere in this Offering Circular and form their own opinion before taking any investment decision. In particular, investors must make their own assessment of the risks associated with the Notes before investing in the Notes and must seek advice from their own tax, financial and legal advisers on the risks associated with an investment in a given Series of Notes and the suitability of an investment in the Notes in light of their own specific circumstances.*

*The Issuer believes that the Notes should only be purchased by investors who are (or act on the advice of) financial institutions or other professional investors who are able to assess the specific risks associated with an investment in the Notes.*

*The risk factors described below may be supplemented in the relevant Pricing Supplement for a specific issue of Notes.*

*Capitalised terms not defined in this section will have the meaning given to them in the section "Terms and Conditions of the Notes". Any reference below to an Article refers to the corresponding article number in the "Terms and Conditions of the Notes" section.*

### **1. RISKS RELATING TO THE ISSUER**

#### **1.1 Legal risks relating to enforcement proceedings**

As a legal entity governed by public law, the Issuer is not subject to private law enforcement procedures, and its assets are exempt from seizure, which reduces the potential remedies for an investor in the case of repayment of the Notes when compared a corporate entity subject to private law. Nonetheless, expenditure in relation to bonds – including in particular debt capital repayment and debt interest expenses – may give rise to payment registration and ordering procedures (*mandatement*) as described in paragraph 1.4 below).

#### **1.2 Property risks related to the operation of the Issuer and its activities**

The asset related risks of the Issuer are relating to all damage, claims, destructions or physical losses that may occur to its movable or immovable property as a whole, in particular following a natural catastrophe, a fire or an act of vandalism.

Additionally, the operation of the Issuer and its activities are likely to present risks notably connected with areas such as damage to property especially involving motor vehicles of its fleet or actions of its servants or elected representatives.

All the risks are covered by insurance policies subscribed through public procurement.

These insurance policies protect the Issuer against the following risks:

- property damage and related risks;
- civil liability and related risks, including a project management component;
- motor vehicle fleet; and
- all exhibition-related risks (temporary and permanent exhibitions, including the transportation of works of art).

In terms of building, extension and building refurbishment, the Département has legal building guarantees, and where required it takes out "building work" and "building site" insurance.

These insurance policies are in addition to the legal protection of officials and elected representatives, provided by the status of civil servant (law 84-53 dated 24 January 1984), law 83-634 dated 13 July 1983 on the rights and duties of civil servants and the General Local Authorities Code (CGCT).

### **1.3 Financial risks**

The Issuer's indebtedness weighs heavily on its operating expenses and a high level of indebtedness is likely to reduce its savings rate and its ability to borrow on satisfactory pricing supplement and exposes the Issuer to financial risks (notably the risk of excessive indebtedness and payment default).

Nonetheless, the status of a legal entity governed by public law and the legal framework for territorial authority borrowing reduces the insolvency risks of the Issuer.

Law no. 82-213 of 2 March 1982 relating to the rights and freedoms of *communes*, *départements* and *regions* has abolished any form of State supervision over the acts of local authorities. Pursuant to such development, the local authorities have acquired full and complete discretionary decision-making powers with regard to funding and the rules governing borrowings have been liberalized and simplified. Henceforth, local authorities may freely raise borrowings and their contractual relationships with money-lenders are governed by private law and the principle of freedom of contract.

However, such freedom of contract is restricted by the following principles:

- borrowings must be exclusively used to finance capital spending;
- if the loan is denominated in foreign currency, the exchange risk must be entirely covered by a currency swap against Euro at the time of the subscription of the loan for the total amount and the total duration of the loan;
- if the interest rate is floating, indices and authorised spreads for the indexation provisions, following a currency swap, if applicable, are set by decree of the Conseil d'Etat and the indexation formulas shall meet criteria of simplicity or predictability of financial costs incurred by the local authority with respect to the loan;
- repayment of the principal must be entirely covered by the local authority's own resources set up by the levy on operating revenue (*i.e.* the gross savings), plus the definitive investment proceeds – other than loans; and
- the law no. 2023-1195 dated 18 December 2023 on public finance programming for the years 2023-2027 succeeds the same law for the period 2018 to 2022, which provided for an upwards curve in deleveraging capacity (ratio between outstanding debt at end of financial year and gross savings for the past financial year, or the average of the last three financial years) for local authorities whose deleveraging capacity exceeded the national reference threshold in 2016 (which is 10 years for the departments in the same category as the Issuer). The new law

refers to this threshold, without however imposing restrictive measures in the event that it is exceeded. Nevertheless, the Government reiterated its desire for local authorities to contribute towards repairing the public finances, for which debt is a major challenge. At this stage, the practical arrangements for this contribution have not been specified, except for the limit imposed on increasing operating expenditure. The Issuer's deleveraging capacity was 9.2 years at 31/12/2023 compared to 4.2 years at 31/12/2022, while the reference threshold is 10 years, as mentioned above. Like other *départements*, the Issuer faced in 2023 the sharp fall in DMTO revenue whilst its expenditure remains to a great extent compromised by social spending, which has resulted in an equally sharp fall in operating surplus. In 2023, the average fall in operating surplus across all *départements* was above 39%;

- the arrangements for the anticipated local authority contributions towards repairing the public finances have yet to be specified. The above-mentioned programming law specifies a limit on any increase in their operating expenditure, pinned to inflation – 0.5%, with certain expenses (AIS and child services) being excluded from the calculation basis. Although no sanction or measures of constraint are specified, the Issuer remains extremely vigilant, as it does to any potential change in the DGF.
- Also yet to be specified is the involvement of local authorities in achieving the carbon neutrality goals set by France: according to the Pisani-Ferry report (May 2023), an additional 66 billion euros per year until 2030 are required. The new political and legislative environment however creates a certain level of uncertainty;
- lastly, article L.1611-3-1 of the CGCT, created by law 2013-672 of 26 July 2013 on the separation and regulation of banking activities, establishes certain limits as to currency, interest rate and associated hedging instruments applied to any loans taken out by the *Département* from a credit institution. However, this article is not intended to apply to bonds as specified in the parliamentary proceedings of this law (Report No. 1091 of the Finance Committee of the National Assembly, tabled on 29 May 2013, in response to Amendment No. 160 of 19 March 2013).

On 21 June, the ACPR revised its assessment of the risks posed by French local authorities which are now 0% weighted compared to 20% previously. Their debt is now categorised as HQLA 1 compared to HQLA 2A previously.

#### **1.4 Risks related to non-repayment of the Issuer's debts**

Repayment of debts constitutes a mandatory expense for the *Département* (whether for the redemption of principal or interest payments) in accordance with Article L.3321-1 of the CGCT. As a consequence, expenditure must be entered in the *Département's* general budget. Should that not be the case and at the request of the *Chambre régionale des comptes*, the legislator has provided for a procedure (under Article L.1612-15 of the CGCT) allowing the *Préfet* to proceed with the payment order and to enter the expenditure in the *Département's* budget. Additionally, if a mandatory expense item is omitted from the budget by *mandatement* (act by which payment by the accountant is ordered) the legislator has also provided for a procedure (article L.1612-16 of the CGCT) allowing the *Préfet* to do it automatically.

Nevertheless, automatic payment registration and ordering procedures (*mandatement*) of the mandatory expense result from a final court order and they are governed by Article 1 of the Law no. 80-539 of 16 July 1980 and Articles L. 911-1 *et seq.* of the French Code of Administrative Justice.



## 1.5 Risks relating to derivative products

The use of financial instruments (derivatives such as swaps, caps, tunnels etc.) is only permitted where it covers exchange rate or interest rate risk, as indicated in inter-ministerial circular no. NOR/IOCB1015077C dated 25 June 2010 relating to financial products offered to local authorities and their public entities and is only authorised for the covering of rate or exchange risks. This text specifies the inherent risks relating to the debt management by local authorities and summarises the current law regarding the use of financial products and financial risks hedging instruments. It repeals the prior circular dated 15 September 1992.

Speculative transactions are strictly prohibited.

The Issuer takes extreme care in terms of the nature of the risks of products it subscribes for and refuses to enter into any offering financial conditions which are abnormally disconnected from the market. Any financial products that may potentially be entered into by the Department would only aim to reduce or limit the impact of financial charges and to totally or partially neutralise exchange risk in case of operations in foreign currencies. As a reminder, all of the Issuer's borrowings are categorised as 1-A on the Gissler scale (Euro-zone index and plain vanilla fixed or floating rate, fixed to floating rate swap and vice versa).

Furthermore, decree 2014-984 of 28 August 2014 passed pursuant to law 2013-672 dated 26 July 2013, sets out in particular the conditions under which local authorities may agree financial contracts and may borrow from credit institutions.

## 1.6 Risks relating to the evolution of resources

As concerns its receipts, the Issuer, being a local authority, is exposed to any potential evolution of its legal and regulatory framework that could amend their structure and yield. Nevertheless, Article 72-2 of the French Constitution specifies that "tax receipts and the other own resources of the local authorities represent for each type of local authority a decisive share of its revenue".

The level of the Issuer's resources depends on the revenue transferred by the State in the context of transfers of powers or successive tax reforms.

The law n°2019-1479 dated 28 December 2019 (Finance Act 2020) voted for the transfer to the *communes* of property tax on built land received by *départements*, in consideration of the abolition of residence tax on main residences. This measure, which took effect in 2021 is compensated for by the award of a portion of national VAT. This is a dynamic tax but subject to the vagaries of the economic environment. This reform goes hand-in-hand with a State guarantee in the event that the compensatory VAT payment falls below the income received in 2020.

In application of the 2023 Finance Law, the abolition of the CVAE was implemented in 2023 under the corporate production tax relief initiative. For the *départements*, this tax was replaced by the transfer of a new portion of VAT. VAT is now the Issuer's largest operating revenue item (23%).

Dynamic growth in receipts (+3.4% in France in 2023 compared to +8.9% in 2022), VAT does not, however, have any direct link with local areas, unlike the two previous taxes collected.

It should also be recalled that, over the course of these various measures, the *Départements* have lost all power over rates.

Despite having fallen sharply in 2023, linked to the slowdown in the real estate market (increased interest rates and fall in loan production, difficulties in the construction and building sectors), Transfer

rights for consideration (DMTO), for their part, still constitute a significant share of the Issuer's resources (18% of total operating revenue in 2023).

However, they are a volatile resource and their volatility has to be constantly monitored by the Issuer. Changes in DMTO also affect the Issuer's contribution to the various DMTO equalisation funds. These have been overhauled under the provisions of the 2020 Finance Act (global approach to all existing funds).

The first signs of recovery, expected in 2024-2025, will be closely monitored.

### **1.7 Risks associated with the Issuer's rating**

The Issuer's rating attributed by Fitch Ratings is merely the expression of an opinion on the level of credit risk associated with the Issuer and does not necessarily reflect all associated risks. This rating does not constitute a recommendation to buy, sell or hold the Notes and may, at any time, be suspended modified or withdrawn by the rating agency.

### **1.8 Risks relating to the Issuer's off-balance sheet transactions**

Loan guarantees or sureties to public or private entities are governed by articles L.3231-4 to L.3231-5 and R.3231-1 to D.3231-2 of the CGCT.

At 31 December 2023, the outstanding debt guaranteed by the Issuer stood at 1.47 Bn€, of which social housing represents 91% (on the same date, the Issuer's own outstanding debt totalled 1.933 Bn€) (see paragraph 6.2 (III)(D) (Loan guarantees granted by the *Département*) in the "Description of the Issuer" section of this Offering Circular).

The Issuer is obliged to comply with three prudential rules determined by law 88-13 of 5 January 1988 known as the "Galland Law". These cumulative rules establish the principle of capping commitments, capping beneficiaries (or dividing risk) and sharing risk. These rules apply only to guarantees granted to private law persons. The "Galland ratio" relating to the commitments ceiling is published in the annexes of the Issuer's initial budget and administrative accounts. In the 2024 primary budget, this ratio amounts to 5.91% (the ceiling is set at 50%); in the 2023 administrative accounts, it was 5.06%.

Every year, the Issuer conducts a financial analysis of the guaranteed entities. In the event of a risk been determined to exist and pursuant to the recommendations of the *Chambre régionale des comptes*, a provision may be calculated.

### **1.9 Risks relating to financial statements**

The Issuer, as a local authority, is not subject to the same accounting standards as a private law issuer. Its financial statements (budgets, administrative accounts) are not subject to the same checks as a private corporate legal entity but are subject to specific accounting rules set, in particular, by decree no 2012-1246 of 7 November 2012 and the CGCT, all as more fully described in paragraph 4.1 (*Budgetary and accounting rules*) in the "Description of the Issuer" section of this Offering Circular. Investors' financial assessment of the Issuer should take into account this specific accounting context.

The Issuer's accounts are subject to State verification, which takes three forms: (i) legality check, (ii) financial checks carried out by the Departmental Prefect and the public auditor and (iii) periodic management review carried out by the Regional Accounting Chamber. These various checks are more fully described in paragraph 4.3 (*The Checks*) of the "Description of the Issuer" section of this Offering Circular.

Once every year, the Issuer carries out an accounts consolidation exercise, presented and voted at a public session: in addition to the statutory consolidation which includes the management accounts of the *Département's* ancillary budgets, an analysis of the accounts of the most important partner entities is performed, after which they are consolidated, offering a wider view of the *Département's* financial position.

### **1.10 Exogenous event risks of high potential impact**

The Covid-19 crisis was an illustration of the external risks to the Issuer that could have a significant impact on its activity. However, these external risks may also be linked to other types of events including, among others, large-scale social movements, strikes and bad weather.

Other events have occurred since the pandemic and are likely to have an impact on local authorities: the war in Ukraine, the increase in the cost of energy and inflation and its corollary, the increase in key interest rates by the European Central Bank (ECB).

These issues are carefully monitored, but their impact remains, at this stage, measured. Relatively contained in 2022, however, the increase in policy rates has a more pronounced effect in 2023. The abatement of inflation and the risk of economic stagnation should however result in falling interest rates in 2024.

Inflation in France is lower than in the rest of Europe (4.9% in 2023 according to INSEE compared to 5.6% in the Eurozone according to Statista).

The impact of rising interest rates and of measures to support purchasing power (wages, solidarity allocations) have been identified as risks by the rating agencies, and factored into their rating scenarios.

All potential risks (energy, inflation, interest rates) are addressed throughout the analysis of the PB 2024 and AA 2023.

### **1.11 Cyber Malware Risks**

Data protection (users and employees) is a sensitive issue.

The Issuer has defined and broken-down an action plan in application of the General Data Protection Regulation (**GDPR**). This plan includes the appointment of a data protection officer (and his/her alternate) and the implementation of data protection measures within all departments.

The Issuer also complies with the general security regulations (**RGS**) that apply to relations between the administration and users in order to guarantee the reliability of these relations (cryptology and protection of electronic exchanges, management of electronic certificates, management of acknowledgements of receipt).

A digital usage charter has also been established, which includes a security component. Data sheets are disseminated, making it possible to inventory risks, adopt good practices, ensure the security of social networks and, more generally, prevent the impact of cyber-malware.

More generally, the Information Systems and Digital Uses Department (**DSIUN**) has defined a General Information System Security Policy (**PGSSI**). The latter specifies the strategic, organizational and methodological framework for identifying and reducing risks related to information and telecommunications systems, whether they arise from an accidental or intentional event.

This policy, which is binding on all departments, is based on several guiding principles: values to be preserved, business responsibility (each component of the information system has an "owner",

responsible for defining the appropriate level of security and identifying the risks relating to said components), individual responsibility (allocation of appropriate rights) and internal organization of information systems (coordination of directors/application developers/administrators/insurance specialists, risk management, legal, human resources).

The Issuer has a data protection unit within the Information Systems and Digital Uses Department. In particular, it has a data protection officer who raises awareness and supports management on a daily basis to strengthen the protection of user and employee data.

Finally, measures are planned if an attack is successful. They aim to ensure the continuity of the business, in line with pre-defined operational priorities, and in particular the possibility of continuing payments. Based on implementing payment orders, they have been defined in partnership with the Departmental Paymaster. Special organisational measures have also been anticipated (use of existing agencies for the payment of certain services).

The Issuer has not had to complain of any loss of data or damage to its information systems and networks.

## **2. RISKS RELATING TO THE NOTES**

### **2.1 General Market Risks**

#### ***The debt instruments market may be volatile and be adversely affected by certain events***

The securities market is affected by economic and market conditions and, to varying degrees, by interest rates, exchange rates and inflation in other European and industrialised countries. No assurance can be given that events in France, Europe or elsewhere will not cause market volatility or that such market volatility will not adversely affect the value of the Notes or that economic and market conditions will not have other adverse effects.

#### ***An active market in the Notes may not develop or be sustained***

No assurance can be given that an active market in the Notes will develop or that, if such market does develop, that it will be sustained or offer sufficient liquidity. If an active market in the Notes does not develop or is not sustained, the market value or price and liquidity of the Notes may be adversely affected. Therefore, investors may not be in a position to easily sell their Notes or to sell them at a price offering a return comparable to similar products for which an active market has developed.

The Issuer has the right to purchase Notes, on the terms set forth in Article 5.7, and the Issuer may issue new Notes, on the terms set forth in Article 13. Such actions may favourably or adversely affect the value of the Notes. If additional or competing products are brought on to the markets, this may adversely affect the value of the Notes.

#### ***Exchange rate and exchange control risks***

The Issuer pays the principal and interest on the Notes in euros (the Specified Currency). This presents certain currency conversion risks if the investor's financial activities are principally conducted in a different currency or monetary unit (the Investor's Currency) than the Specified Currency. Such risks include the risk that exchange rates may fluctuate significantly (including fluctuations due to devaluation of the Specified Currency or revaluation of the Investor's Currency) and the risk that the authorities with jurisdiction over the Investor's Currency may impose or modify exchange controls. An increase in the value of the Investor's Currency compared to the Specified Currency would reduce (i) the equivalent yield of the Notes in the Investor's Currency, (ii) the equivalent value in the

Investor's Currency of the principal payable on the Notes and (iii) the equivalent market value in the Investor's Currency of the Notes.

The Government and the monetary authorities may impose (as has happened in the past) exchange control measures that may adversely affect exchange rates. Accordingly, investors may receive payment of an amount of principal or interest less than expected, or even receive neither interest nor principal.

## **2.2 General risks related to the Notes**

### ***Risks related to rating of the Notes***

The Issuer and the Programme have been rated AA- by Fitch. Independent credit rating agencies may assign a rating to Notes issued under this Programme. Such rating does not reflect the potential impact of the risk factors described in this section and all other risk factors that may affect the value of the Notes issued under this Programme. A rating does not constitute a recommendation to buy, sell or hold Notes and may be revised or withdrawn at any time by the rating agency.

### ***The Notes may be redeemed prior to maturity***

If, at the time of redemption of principal or payment of interest, the Issuer is obliged to pay additional amounts in accordance with Article 7.2, it may reimburse the Notes in full at the Early Redemption Amount together with, unless provided otherwise in the applicable Pricing Supplement, all interest accrued until the relevant redemption date (excluded).

Similarly, if it becomes unlawful for the Issuer to fulfil or comply with its obligations under the Notes, the Issuer may, in accordance with Article 5.9, redeem the Notes, in full but not in part only, at the Early Redemption Amount together with all interest accrued until the relevant redemption date (excluded).

Any early redemption option available to the Issuer, specified in the Pricing Supplement of an issue of Notes may result in the Noteholders receiving a return considerably below their expectations.

The Pricing Supplement of an issue of Notes may include an early redemption option for the Issuer. In such case, the yield at the time of redemption may be lower than expected and the value of the amount redeemed may be less than the purchase price of the Notes paid by the Noteholder. Consequently, part of the capital invested by Noteholders in the Notes may be lost, resulting in the Noteholder receiving less than the full amount of capital invested. Furthermore, in the event of early redemption, investors who decide to reinvest the funds they receive may only be able to reinvest in securities that offer lower returns than the redeemed Notes.

### ***Risks related to the optional redemption by the Issuer***

The market value of the Notes may be affected by the optional redemption of the Notes at the option of the Issuer. During the periods where the Issuer can exercise such redemptions, in general, this market value does not substantially increase above the price at which the Notes may be redeemed. This can also be the case before any redemption period.

It can be expected that the Issuer would redeem the Notes when its borrowing costs are lower than the interest rate of the Notes. In such case, an investor will not, generally, reinvest the proceeds of the redemption at an actual interest rate as high as the interest rate of the redeemed Notes and may only be able to invest in Notes that offer a significantly lower yield. Prospective investors must also take into account the risk linked to the reinvestment in the light of other available investments at the time of the investment.

Moreover, the exercise of redemption at the option of the Issuer for some of the Notes may affect the liquidity of Notes of the same Series. In the event of Materialised Notes, depending on the number of Notes of the same Series for which the redemption option provided for in the relevant Pricing Supplement has been exercised, or, in the event of Dematerialised Notes depending on the proportion of the nominal amount of all the Dematerialised Notes thus reduced, the market for such Notes could become illiquid.

#### ***Risks relating redemption at the option of the Noteholders***

The exercise of redemption at the option of the Noteholders for some Notes may affect the liquidity of Notes of the same Series for which such option has not been exercised. Depending on the number of Notes of the same Series in respect of which the optional redemption provided for in the applicable Pricing Supplement has been exercised, the market of Notes for which such a redemption has not been exercised may become illiquid. In addition, investors requesting redemption of their Notes could not be able to reinvest the funds received from such early redemption so as to receive a yield equivalent to that of the redeemed Notes.

#### ***Amendment of the Terms and Conditions of the Notes***

Noteholders will be grouped for the defence of their common interests in a Masse (as defined in Article 10 of the Terms and Conditions of the Notes "Representation of Noteholders") and may hold general meetings of Noteholders or take written decisions. The Terms and Conditions of the Notes provide that in certain cases Noteholders, not present or represented at a general meeting, or who did not take part in the written decision, may be bound by resolutions voted by Noteholders who were present or represented, even if they disagree with the vote or the written decision.

Subject to the provisions of Article 10 of the Terms and Conditions of the Notes "Representation of Noteholders", Noteholders may by Collective Decision, as defined in the Terms and Conditions of the Notes, deliberate on any proposal relating to the modification of the Terms and Conditions of the Notes, notably on any proposal, whether for arbitration or settlement, relating to rights that are in dispute or the subject of judicial decision.

#### ***Change of law***

The Terms and Conditions of the Notes are governed by French law as of the date of this Offering Circular. No assurance can be given as to the consequences of any judicial decision or any change of French law or regulation subsequent to the date of this Offering Circular.

#### ***Taxation***

Prospective purchasers and sellers of the Notes should be aware that they may be required to pay taxes or documentary charges or duties in accordance with the laws and practices of the country where the Notes are transferred or in other jurisdictions. In some jurisdictions, no official statements of the tax authorities or court decisions on the tax treatment of securities such as the Notes are available.

Prospective investors are advised not to rely upon the tax summary contained in this Offering Circular and, if relevant, any supplement thereto, but to ask for their own tax adviser's advice based on their individual situation with respect to the subscription, acquisition, holding, proceeds, transfer and redemption of the Notes. Only these advisors are in a position to duly consider the specific situation of a prospective investor.

### ***Loss of investment in the Notes***

The Issuer reserves the right to purchase Notes, at any price, on the stock exchange or otherwise, in accordance with applicable regulations. Although this does not impact on the normal schedule for redemption of the Notes remaining outstanding, it would however reduce the yield of the Notes redeemed early. Similarly, in the event of change of the taxation rules applicable to the Notes, the Issuer may be obliged to redeem the Notes in full at the Anticipated Redemption Amount as defined in the applicable Pricing Supplement. Any early redemption of the Notes may result in the Noteholders receiving a yield significantly below their expectations.

Also, there is a risk that the Notes will not be redeemed on their maturity date if the Issuer is no longer solvent. The non-redemption or partial redemption of the Notes would de facto result in a total or partial loss of investment in the Notes.

Finally, any sale of a Note on the market may occur at a price below the purchase price and cause a capital loss. Under this operation, the Investor does not benefit from any protection or guarantee of the invested capital. The initial invested capital is exposed to the market risks and may thus not be returned in case of adverse stock exchange evolution. Investors may lose all or part of their investment value, depending on the case.

### ***Verification of legality***

The *Préfet* of Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, *Préfet* of the Bouches-du-Rhône has two months as from the date of the reception to the *préfecture* of any resolutions and/or decisions of the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône (*Département des Bouches-du-Rhône*) relating to private law contracts entered into by it to verify the legality of such deliberation and/or the decision to sign such contracts and, if he considers them to be illegal, to refer them to the relevant administrative tribunal and, if appropriate, seek an order for them to be suspended. The relevant administrative tribunal may then, if it considers such deliberations and/or the decision to sign such contracts to be illegal, order their suspension and/or annul them in whole or in part. In addition, depending on the nature of the illegality and any particular circumstances, the annulment of the relevant deliberation and/or decision may lead to the regularisation or annulment of contracts made pursuant to the annulled acts.

Furthermore, if a contract entered into by the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône is categorised as an administrative contract, the *préfet* is entitled to contest the legality of the choice of contract counterparty, the resolution authorising the signing of, as well as the decision to sign, the contract before the abuse of power judge up until the conclusion of the contract (actions already commenced and not yet ruled upon become groundless as from the date of signing of the contract in dispute).

### ***Third party action***

A third party, having legal standing, may bring administrative proceedings (*recours administratif*) (within two months of notification or publication of the act) before the President of the *Conseil départemental des Bouches-du-Rhône* or make a petition for referral (*déféré préfectoral*) (within two months of the date on which the act takes effect) before the *préfet* of the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône against any resolution of the *Conseil départemental des Bouches-du-Rhône*, any decision by delegation from the latter, or if applicable any decision to sign a contract or any other decision constituting an administrative act.

Insofar as the administrative proceedings have not resulted in a decision to withdraw or repeal the contested administrative act, or insofar as the *Préfet* has not referred the contested administrative act before the administrative courts, such same third party has in principle a period of two months (or four months if residing abroad) from the date of the express or implied decision of rejection of the *recours administratif*, to bring an action for abuse of power (*recours en excès de pouvoir*) before the

administrative courts and, if appropriate, request that the contested act be suspended (under the *référé-suspension* process). Where a *recours administratif* has been brought and notification of the express decision of rejection is not itself accompanied by information on the avenues and deadlines for appeal, the interested party has the reasonable period of one year as from the date of the notification to petition the judge. Furthermore, in the case of an implied rejection of a *recours administratif*, the appeal deadlines cannot be enforced against the appellant if the acknowledgement of receipt was not supplied to them or did not contain the details required under the regulations. In such case, the interested party has the reasonable period of one year to lodge their appeal against the administrative decision they are contesting as from the date on which they became aware of the implied decision of rejection of their *recours administratif*.

The third party may also bring such proceedings directly before the administrative courts within a period of two months (or four months for petitioners residing abroad) from the date of publication of the contested administrative act and may, if appropriate, request that the contested act be suspended. If the contested administrative act was not duly published, such proceedings may be brought by any third party “having legal standing” within a reasonable timeframe of no more than one year in principle.

If any administrative proceedings, prefectoral referral or action for abuse of power is brought against any resolution of the *Conseil départemental des Bouches-du-Rhône*, or any decision taken under delegation of authority from the latter, or any decision to sign a contract or any other decision constituting an administrative act, the President of the *Conseil départemental des Bouches-du-Rhône* or the competent administrative judge may, if they consider that a rule of law has been breached, as appropriate, either withdraw or repeal it (in the case of the *Conseil départemental des Bouches-du-Rhône*), or annul it in whole or in part (in the case of the competent administrative judge), which may have the effect of rendering unlawful any contract(s) entered into on the basis of such act. In the event of a *référé-suspension* process, the competent administrative judge may also decide to suspend the contested administrative act if the urgency of the matter so requires.

Furthermore, if a contract entered into by the *Conseil départemental des Bouches-du-Rhône* is characterised as an administrative contract, a third party having legal standing may bring a full remedy action (*recours de pleine juridiction*) before the administrative courts against such contract, or certain of its non-regulatory terms that are not intrinsically connected thereto, within a period of two months (or four months for petitioners residing abroad) from the date of fulfilment of appropriate publication measures and, if appropriate, request that such contract be suspended. Moreover, if the administrative contract has not been duly published, proceedings may be brought by any third party having legal standing, within a reasonable timeframe of no more than one year in principle. If the competent judge finds the existence of defects vitiating the contract, the judge may, having assessed the significance and consequences, and taken into account the nature, of such defects, decide to terminate or annul the contract. In the event of a *référé-suspension* process, the competent administrative judge may also decide to suspend performance of the contract if the urgency of the matter so requires.

If any such decision is taken as a result of such proceedings, this may have a material adverse impact on Noteholders insofar as their rights may be denied and the value of the Notes may be reduced resulting for Noteholders in a partial loss of their investment in the Notes.

### **2.3 Risks related to a specific issue of Notes**

#### ***Floating Rate Notes***

A key difference between Floating Rate Notes and Fixed Rate Notes is that interest payments on Floating Rate Notes cannot be predicted. Due to fluctuations in interest payments, investors cannot determine the actual yield on the Floating Rate Notes at the time of purchase, and therefore their investment returns cannot be compared to investments with longer fixed interest periods. If the terms



and conditions of the Notes specify frequent interest payment dates, investors are exposed to reinvestment risk if market interest rates fall. In such case, investors will only be able to reinvest their interest income at a potentially lower prevailing interest rate.

An investment in Floating Rate Notes comprises (i) a reference rate and, if applicable, (ii) a margin to be added or subtracted, as applicable, to such reference rate. In general, the relevant margin will not change over the term of the Note, but there will be a periodic adjustment (as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement) of the reference rate (for example, every three (3) or six (6) months) which will change depending on the general market conditions.

Accordingly, the market value of Floating Rate Notes may be volatile if changes, in particular short-term changes, on the interest rate market applicable to the relevant rate cannot be applied to the interest rate of such Notes until the next periodic adjustment of the relevant rate.

### ***Fixed Rate Notes***

It cannot be ruled out that the value of Fixed Rate Notes may be adversely affected by future fluctuations on the interest rate markets.

### ***Fixed/Floating Rate Notes***

Fixed/Floating Rate Notes have an interest rate which, automatically or following a decision by the Issuer on a date set out in the Pricing Supplement, may change from a fixed rate to a floating rate or from a floating rate to a fixed rate. The conversion (be it automatic or optional) may affect the secondary market in the Notes to the extent that it may lead to a fall in overall borrowing costs. If a fixed rate is converted into a floating rate, the margin between the fixed rate and the floating rate may be less favourable than margins on comparable Floating Rate Notes with the same benchmark rate. In addition, the new floating rate may be lower at any time than the interest rates on its other Notes. If a floating rate is converted into a fixed rate, the fixed rate may be lower than the applicable rates on its other Notes.

### ***Zero Coupon Notes and other Notes issued below par or with an issue premium***

The market value of Zero Coupon Notes and other securities issued below par or with an issue premium tends to be more sensitive to fluctuation due to variations in interest rates than typical interest-bearing securities. Generally, the longer the maturity of the Notes, the more the price volatility of such Notes resembles that of typical interest-bearing securities of similar maturity.

### ***The regulation and reform of “benchmarks” may adversely affect the value of the Notes linked to or referencing such “benchmarks”***

Interest rates and indices which are deemed to be Benchmarks, (including EURIBOR) are the subject of recent national and international regulatory guidance and proposals for reform. Some of these reforms are already effective whilst others are still to be implemented. These reforms may cause such Benchmarks to perform differently than in the past, to disappear entirely, to be subject to revised calculation methods, or have other consequences which cannot be predicted. Any such consequence could have a material adverse effect on any Floating Rate Notes linked to or referencing such a Benchmark. Regulation (EU) 2016/1011 (as amended, the "**Benchmarks Regulation**") was published in the Official Journal of the EU on 29 June 2016 and applies since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. The Benchmarks Regulation applies to the provision of Benchmarks, the contribution of input data to a Benchmark and the use of a Benchmark within the European Union. It could have a material impact on any Floating Rate Notes linked to or referencing a Benchmark, in particular in any of the following circumstances:

- if an index which is a Benchmark could not be used by a supervised entity in certain ways if its administrator does not obtain authorisation or registration or, if based in a non-EU jurisdiction, the administrator is not recognised as equivalent or recognised or endorsed and the transitional provisions do not apply; and
- the methodology or other terms of the Benchmark could be changed in order to comply with the requirements of the Benchmarks Regulation. Such changes could, among other things, have the effect of reducing or increasing the rate or level or otherwise affecting the volatility of the published rate or the level of the Benchmark.

More broadly, any of the international or national reforms, or the general increased regulatory scrutiny of Benchmarks, could increase the costs and risks of administering or otherwise participating in the setting of a Benchmark and complying with any such regulations or requirements. Such factors may have the following effects on certain Benchmarks (including EURIBOR): (i) discourage market participants from continuing to administer or contribute to the Benchmark; (ii) trigger changes in the rules or methodologies used in the Benchmark or (iii) lead to the disappearance of the Benchmark. Any of the above changes or any other subsequent changes, following international or national reforms or other initiatives or investigations, could have a material adverse effect on the value of and return on any Floating Rate Notes linked to or referencing a Benchmark.

Investors should be aware that, if a Benchmark were discontinued or otherwise unavailable, the rate of interest on Notes which are linked to or which reference such Benchmark will be determined for the relevant period by the fall-back provisions applicable to such Notes (if a Benchmark Event occurs, a specific fall-back provision will apply - please refer to the risk factor entitled "*The occurrence of a Benchmark Event could have a material adverse effect on the value of and return on any such Notes linked to or referencing such Benchmarks*" below). Depending on the manner in which a Benchmark is to be determined under the Terms and Conditions, this may in certain circumstances (i) if FBF Determination applies, involve the application of a retrospective, risk-free overnight rate, whereas the benchmark is expressed on a forward-looking basis which includes an element of inter-bank loan related-risk or (ii) if Screen Rate Determination applies, result in the effective application of a fixed rate based on the rate which applied in the previous period when the Benchmark was available. Any of the foregoing could have an adverse effect on the value or liquidity of, and return on, any Notes linked to or referencing a Benchmark.

The Benchmarks Regulation has been amended by Regulation (EU) 2019/2089 of the European Parliament and of the Council dated 27 November 2019 and then again by Regulation (EU) 2021/168 of the European Parliament and of the Council dated 10 February 2021 the (**the Amending Regulation**).

The Amending Regulation introduces a harmonised approach to deal with the disappearance or abandonment of certain benchmarks by conferring on the European Commission the power to nominate replacement benchmarks through regulation, such replacement being restricted to financial contracts and instruments. These measures may have a negative impact on the value or liquidity or return on Notes linked or making reference to a “benchmark” if the fallback provisions in the Terms of the Notes are not considered to be appropriate. Furthermore, transitional measures applicable to benchmarks administered in third countries have been extended until the end of 2025 by delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2222 of the Commission dated 14 July 2023.

Investors should consult their own independent advisers and make their own assessment about the potential risks imposed by the Benchmarks Regulation reforms in making any investment decision with respect to any Floating Rate Notes linked to or referencing a Benchmark.

***The occurrence of a Benchmark Event could have a material adverse effect on the value of and return on any such Notes linked to or referencing such Benchmarks***

The Terms and Conditions of the Notes provide for certain fallback arrangements in the event that a Benchmark Event occurs, including if an inter-bank offered rate (such as EURIBOR) or other relevant reference rate, and/or any page on which such Benchmark may be published, becomes unavailable, or if the Issuer, the Calculation Agent, any Paying Agent or any other party responsible for the calculation of the Rate of Interest (as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement) are no longer permitted lawfully to calculate interest on any Notes by reference to such Benchmark under the Benchmarks Regulation or otherwise. Such fallback arrangements include the possibility that the rate of interest could be set by reference to a Successor Rate or an Alternative Rate, with or without the application of an Adjustment Spread (which, if applied, could be positive or negative, and would be applied with a view to reducing or eliminating, to the fullest extent reasonably practicable in the circumstances, any economic prejudice or benefit (as applicable) to investors arising out of the replacement of the relevant Benchmark), and may include amendments to the Terms and Conditions of the Notes to ensure the proper operation of the successor or replacement Benchmark, all as determined by the Independent Adviser and without the consent of the Noteholders.

In certain circumstances, including where no Independent Adviser has been appointed and no Successor Rate or Alternative Rate (as applicable) is determined, other fallbacks rules may be used, which consist in the rate of interest for such Interest Period to be based on the rate which applied for the immediately preceding Interest Period, as set out in the risk factor above entitled "*The regulation and reform of "benchmarks" may adversely affect the value of Notes linked to or referencing such "benchmarks"*".

In addition, due to the uncertainty concerning the availability of Successor Rates and Alternative Rates and the involvement of an Independent Adviser, the relevant fallback provisions may not operate as intended at the relevant time.

Any such consequences could have a material adverse effect on the value of and return on any such Notes.

Moreover, any of the above matters or any other significant change to the setting or existence of any relevant rate could affect the ability of the Issuer to meet its obligations under the Floating Rate Notes or the Fixed/Floating Rate Notes or could have a material adverse effect on the value or liquidity of, and the amount payable under, the Floating Rate Notes or the Fixed/Floating Rate Notes. Investors should note that, the Independent Adviser will also have discretion to adjust the relevant Successor Rate or Alternative Rate (as applicable) in the circumstances described above. Any such adjustment could have unexpected commercial consequences and there can be no assurance that, due to the particular circumstances of each Noteholders, any such adjustment will be favourable to each Noteholder.

Investors should consider all of these matters when making their investment decision with respect to the relevant Floating Rate Notes.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

*The following general description of the Programme must be read with all the information setup in this Offering Circular. The Notes shall be issued pursuant to the terms agreed between the Issuer and the relevant Dealer(s) and, unless specified otherwise in the relevant Pricing Supplement, the Notes shall be governed by the Terms and Conditions specified in pages 30 to 60 of the Offering Circular.*

*Terms and expressions defined in the section "Terms and Conditions of the Notes" hereafter shall have the same meaning in this general description of the Programme.*

**Issuer:** Département des Bouches-du-Rhône

**Description of the Programme:** Euro Medium Term Note Programme (the **Programme**).  
The Notes will constitute obligations pursuant to French Law.

**Arranger:** HSBC Continental Europe

**Dealers:** Crédit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank  
Crédit Mutuel Arkéa  
HSBC Continental Europe  
Natixis

The Issuer may, at any time, revoke any Dealer under the Programme, or appoint supplement Dealers either for one or several Tranches, or for the Programme as a whole. Any reference made in this Offering Circular to the **Permanent Dealers** refers to persons named above as Dealers and to any other person who would have been appointed as a Dealer for the Programme (and who would have not been revoked) and any reference made to **Dealers** refers to any Permanent Dealer and any other person named as Dealer for one or several Tranches.

**Fiscal Agent and Principal Paying Agent:** BNP Paribas (acting through its Securities Services business)

**Calculation Agent:** Unless otherwise stipulated in the applicable Pricing Supplement, BNP Paribas (acting through its Securities Services business).

**Maximum Amount of the Programme:** The aggregate nominal amount of the Notes outstanding shall not, at any time, exceed euros 1,000,000,000.

**Issuance method:** The Notes shall be issued under syndicated or non-syndicated issues.

The Notes shall be issued by series (each a **Series**), at same or different issue dates, and shall be governed (except for the first interest payment) by identical terms, the Notes of each Series being fungible amongst themselves. Each Series may be issued by tranches (each a **Tranche**), having same or different issue dates. The specific terms of each Tranche (which shall be supplemented, if necessary, on the basis of additional terms and shall be identical to the terms of the other Tranches of the same Series (with the exception of the issue date, issue price, first interest payment and nominal amount of the Tranche)) shall

be set up in the applicable pricing supplement (the **Pricing Supplement**) supplementing this Offering Circular.

**Maturities:** Subject to compliance with all applicable legislations, regulations and directives, the Notes shall have a minimum maturity of one month and a maximum maturity of 30 years from the initial issue date as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Currency:** Subject to compliance with all applicable legislations, regulations and directives, the Notes shall be issued in euros.

**Denomination(s):** The Notes shall have the denomination(s) specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement (the **Specified Denomination(s)**). Dematerialised Notes shall be issued in one Specified Denomination only. Notes shall have a single denomination greater than or equal to euros 100,000 or to any other greater amount as may be authorised or required by the relevant competent authority or by any legislation or regulation applicable to the Specified Currency.

Dematerialised Notes shall be issued in a single denomination.

**Status of the Notes and negative pledge:** The Notes and, if any, related Receipts and Coupons constitute direct, unconditional, non-subordinated and (subject to the following paragraph) non-guaranteed obligations of the Issuer which rank *pari passu* amongst themselves and (subject to mandatory exceptions under French Law) *pari passu* with any other present or future, non-subordinated and non-guaranteed obligation of the Issuer.

As long as the Notes or, if any, Receipts or Coupons linked to the Notes will remain outstanding (as defined in the Terms and Conditions), the Issuer will not grant or permit to subsist any mortgage, pledge, lien or any other security interest upon any of its assets or revenues, present or future, in order to secure any present or future indebtedness, represented by bonds, securities or other negotiable instruments admitted to trading with a maturity greater than a year and which are (or are able to be) admitted to trading on any market, unless the obligations of the Issuer under the Notes and, if any, Receipts and Coupons, do not benefit from an equivalent and *pari passu* security interest.

**Events of Default:** The terms and conditions of the Notes set up events of default, as described further in paragraph "Terms and Conditions of the Notes – Events of default".

**Redemption Amount:** Unless events of default or redemption and cancellation, the Notes shall be redeemed at the Maturity Date specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement and at the Final Redemption Amount.

**Optional Redemption:** The Pricing Supplement prepared for each issue of Notes will indicate if whether or not they may be redeemed at the option of the Issuer (as a whole or in part) and/or at the option of the Noteholders before their expected maturity date, and if they may be, the terms applicable to such redemption.

- Redemption in Instalments:** The Pricing Supplement relating to Notes redeemable in two or several instalments shall specify the dates on which such Notes may be redeemed and the amounts to be redeemed.
- Early Redemption:** Subject to provisions of paragraph "Optional Redemption" above, the Notes shall only be redeemed early at the option of the Issuer for tax reasons and/or illegality.
- Withholding tax:** All payments of principal, interest or other amounts linked to the Notes, Receipts or Coupons by or on behalf of the Issuer shall be made without any withholding or deduction for any taxes or duties of whatever nature imposed, levied or collected by or on behalf of France or any authority therein or thereof having power to tax, unless such withholding or deduction is required by law.
- If French law should require that payments of principal, interest or other proceeds in respect of any Note, Receipt or Coupon be subject to withholding or deduction with respect to any taxes or duties whatsoever, present or future, the Issuer will, to the fullest extent then permitted by law, pay such additional amounts as may be necessary in order that the holders of Notes, Receipts and Coupons receive the full amount that would have been payable in the absence of such withholding or deduction; subject to certain exceptions described further in section "Terms and Conditions of the Notes - Taxation" of this Offering Circular.
- Interest Periods and Rates:** For each Series, the duration of interest periods of the Notes, the applicable interest rate and its calculation method may vary or stay the same, as the case may be. The Notes may have a maximum interest rate (a **Maximum Interest Rate**), a minimum interest rate (a **Minimum Interest Rate**) or both at the same time, it being specified that (i) in no case shall the amount of interest payable for each Note be less than zero and (ii) unless a higher Minimum Interest Rate is provided in the relevant Pricing Supplement, the Minimum Interest Rate shall be equal to 0. The Notes may bear interest at different rates during the same interest period through the use of accrual interest periods (defined in the Terms and Conditions as Accrual Interest Periods). All this information will figure in the applicable Pricing Supplement.
- Fixed Rate Notes:** Fixed interest will be payable in arrear at the date(s) for each period indicated in the applicable Pricing Supplement.
- Floating Rate Notes:** Floating Rate Notes will bear interest at the determined rate for each Series as follows:
- (a) on the same basis as the floating rate indicated in the relevant Pricing Supplement applicable to a notional interest rate exchange transaction in the relevant Specified Currency, pursuant to the *Fédération Bancaire Française* (the **FBF**) Master Agreement dated June 2013 relating to transactions on forward financial instruments supplemented by the Technical Schedules published by the FBF, or

- (b) by reference to EURIBOR (or TIBEUR in French) or to any Successor Rate or Alternative Rate, in each case adjusted in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Notes, or to TEC10, or
- (c) in the event of cessation of the benchmark, by reference to the Successor Rate or Alternative Rate determined by the Independent Adviser appointed by the Issuer, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Notes,

in each case, as adjusted according to margins eventually applicable and paid at the dates indicated in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Benchmark discontinuation:**

If a Benchmark Event occurs such that any interest rate cannot be determined by reference to the original benchmark or original screen rate (as applicable) specified in the relevant Pricing Supplement, then the Issuer shall make reasonable efforts to appoint an Independent Adviser to determine a Successor Rate or an Alternative Rate. See Article 4.3(c)(iii) of the Terms and Conditions of the Notes “Discontinuation of the Benchmark” for further details.

**Fixed/Floating Rate Notes:**

Each Fixed/Floating Rate Note bears interest at a rate (i) that the Issuer may decide to convert on the date indicated in the applicable Pricing Supplement from a Fixed Rate to a Floating Rate (of the types of Floating Rate Notes specified above) (or vice-versa) or (ii) that shall be automatically converted from a Fixed Rate to a Floating Rate (or vice-versa) on the date specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Zero Coupon Notes:**

Zero Coupon Notes may be issued at par or below par and will not pay interest.

**Form of the Notes:**

The Notes may be issued either in dematerialised form (**Dematerialised Notes**) or in materialised form (**Materialised Notes**).

Dematerialised Notes may be, at the option of the Issuer, issued in bearer form (*au porteur*) or in registered form (*au nominatif*) and, in such case, at the option of the relevant Noteholder, either in fully registered form (*au nominatif pur*) or in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*). No document materialising the title of the Notes will be issued.

Materialised Notes will only be in bearer form. A Temporary Global Certificate in respect of each Tranche of Materialised Notes will be initially issued. Materialised Notes may only be issued outside France.

**Governing Law:**

French law. Any dispute relating to the Notes, Receipts, Coupons or Talons shall be submitted to the competent court under jurisdiction of the Paris Court of Appeal (subject to mandatory provisions related to territorial jurisdiction of French courts). No attachment proceedings under private law can be taken and no seize proceedings can be implemented against the assets or properties of the Issuer as a legal person governed by public law.

<b>Clearing systems:</b>	<p>Euroclear France as a central depository in relation to the Dematerialised Notes and, in relation to the Materialised Notes, Clearstream and Euroclear or any other clearing system that may be agreed between the Issuer, the Fiscal Agent and the relevant Dealer.</p> <p>Notes admitted to trading on Euronext Paris will be cleared by Euroclear France.</p>
<b>Initial Delivery of Dematerialised Notes:</b>	<p>The accounting letter (<i>lettre comptable</i>) (in the case of a syndicated issue) or admission form relating to each Tranche of Dematerialised Notes shall be delivered to Euroclear France, acting as central depository, one Paris business day before the issue date of such Tranche.</p>
<b>Initial Delivery of Materialised Notes:</b>	<p>At least at the issue date of each Tranche of Materialised Notes, the Temporary Global Certificate relating to such Tranche shall be delivered to a common depository for Euroclear and Clearstream or to any other clearing system, or may be delivered outside any clearing system provided that the method of such delivery has been agreed in advance by the Issuer, the Fiscal Agent and the relevant Dealer(s).</p>
<b>Issue Price:</b>	<p>The Notes may be issued at their nominal amount or at a discount or premium to their nominal amount.</p>
<b>Admission to Trading:</b>	<p>On Euronext Paris and/or on any other Regulated Market of the European Economic Area (<b>EEA</b>) and/or on a non-regulated market which may be indicated on the applicable Pricing Supplement. The applicable Pricing Supplement may specify that a Series of Notes shall not be admitted to trading.</p>
<b>Rating:</b>	<p>The Programme has been granted an AA- rating by Fitch Ratings Ireland Limited (<b>Fitch</b>). Notes issued under the Programme may be rated or not. The rating of the Notes, if any, shall be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. The rating of the Notes may not necessarily be the same as that of the Programme. A rating is not a recommendation to buy, sell or hold Notes and may be suspended, amended or withdrawn at any time by the relevant rating agency.</p> <p>At the date of the Offering Circular, Fitch is established in the European Union and registered pursuant to Regulation (EC) No. 1060/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council dated 16 September 2006 on credit rating agencies, as amended (the <b>CRA Regulation</b>) and is included on the list of registered credit rating agencies published by the European Securities and Markets Authority on its website (<a href="https://www.esma.europa.eu/credit-rating-agencies/cra-authorisation">https://www.esma.europa.eu/credit-rating-agencies/cra-authorisation</a>) in accordance with the CRA Regulation.</p>
<b>Selling restrictions:</b>	<p>There are restrictions relating to the sale of Notes and the distribution of the offering materials in different jurisdictions.</p> <p>The Issuer is Category 1 for the purposes of Regulation S under the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended.</p>



Materialised Notes shall be issued pursuant to Section (U.S. Treas. Reg.) §1.163-5(c)(2)(i)(D) of the U.S. Treasury Regulations (**D Rules**) unless (a) the applicable Pricing Supplement provide that such Materialised Notes are issued pursuant to Section (U.S. Treas. Reg.) §1.163-5(c)(2)(i)(C) of the U.S. Treasury regulations (**C Rules**), or (b) the Materialised Notes are not issued pursuant to C Rules or D Rules, but under such conditions that these Materialised Notes shall not constitute "registration required obligations" by the United States Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982 (TEFRA), in such case the applicable Pricing Supplement shall indicate that the transaction is outside the scope of the TEFRA rules.

The TEFRA rules do not apply to Dematerialised Notes.

## DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

I. This Offering Circular shall be read and construed together with the sections of the documents listed in the table below which have previously been published on the Issuer's website (<https://www.departement13.fr/le-13/institution/le-budget/lemprunt-obligataire/>). The sections of these documents are incorporated into, and deemed to form an integral part of, this Offering Circular.

Documents	Sections incorporated by reference
Base Prospectus dated 15 October 2013 which has received the <i>Autorité des Marchés Financiers</i> ' (AMF) visa no. 13-550 dated 15 October 2013.	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 24 to 47 (the <b>2013 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Base Prospectus dated 23 September 2014 which has received AMF visa no. 14-513 dated 23 September 2014.	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 22 to 50 (the <b>2014 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Base Prospectus dated 5 October 2015 which has received AMF visa no. 15-515 dated 5 October 2015.	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 23 to 51 (the <b>2015 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Base Prospectus dated 25 November 2016 which has received AMF visa no. 16-551 dated 25 November 2016.	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 23 to 50 (the <b>2016 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Base Prospectus dated 20 April 2018 which has received AMF visa no. 18-141 dated 20 April 2018.	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 24 to 51 (the <b>2018 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Base Prospectus dated 1 April 2019 which has received AMF visa no. 19-123 dated 1 April 2019.	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 30 to 63 (the <b>2019 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Offering Circular dated 15 September 2020	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 29 to 60 (the <b>2020 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Offering Circular dated 7 October 2021	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 28 to 58 (the <b>2021 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Offering Circular dated 11 October 2022	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 30 to 60 (the <b>2022 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )
Offering Circular dated 12 October 2023	"Terms and Conditions of the Notes" pages 29 to 59 (the <b>2023 Terms and Conditions of the Notes</b> )

The 2013 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2014 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2015 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2016 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2018 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2019 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2020 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2021 Terms and Conditions of the Notes, the 2022 Terms and Conditions of the Notes and the 2023 Terms and Conditions of the Notes are deemed to form an integral part of this Offering Circular for the requirements of the issuance of equivalents notes. The other parts of the base prospectus dated 15 October 2013, of the base prospectus dated 23 September 2014, of the base prospectus dated 5 October 2015, of the Base Prospectus dated 25 November 2016, of the Base Prospectus dated 20 April 2018, of the Base Prospectus dated 1 April 2019, of the offering circular dated 15 September 2020, of the offering circular dated 7 October 2021, of the offering circular dated 11 October 2022 and of the offering circular dated 12 October 2023 are not incorporated by reference.

Any statement contained in any document which is deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be amended or replaced for the purposes of this Offering Circular to the extent that a statement contained herein amends or supplements any such previous statement. Any statement so amended or replaced shall be deemed not to form an integral part of this Offering Circular unless it has been replaced or amended in accordance with the above provisions.

II. The following documents, which shall be published on the dedicated page of the Issuer's website (<https://www.departement13.fr/le-13/linstitution/le-budget/>) after the date of this Offering Circular, shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference and to form an integral part thereof as from the date of their publication:

- the latest up-to-date version of the Issuer's administrative accounts; and
- the latest up-to-date version of the Issuer's budget (primary or supplemental).

III. Investors are deemed to be aware of all information contained in the documents incorporated by reference (or deemed to be incorporated by reference) in this Offering Circular, as if such information were included in this Offering Circular. Investors who have not made themselves aware of such information should do so before investing in any Notes.

## **SUPPLEMENT TO THE OFFERING CIRCULAR**

Any new material fact or any material error or inaccuracy concerning the information contained in the Offering Circular, which may have a substantial impact on any assessment of the Notes and which occurs or becomes apparent between the date of the Offering Circular and the commencement of trading on a regulated market if this event occurs later, must be mentioned in a supplement to the Offering Circular. The Issuer undertakes to give to each Dealer at least one copy of any supplement. No supplement shall be prepared in relation to the information referred to in paragraph II of the section “Documents incorporated by reference”.

Any Offering Circular supplement shall be published on the dedicated page of the Issuer’s website (<https://www.departement13.fr/le-13/linstitution/le-budget/lemprunt-obligataire/>).

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE NOTES

*The following is the text of the terms and conditions that, subject to amendment or completion in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Pricing Supplement, shall apply to the Notes (the **Terms and Conditions**). In the case of Dematerialised Notes, the text of the terms and conditions of the Notes shall not appear on the reverse side of the Physical Notes evidencing title thereto, but shall be constituted by the following text as completed by the provisions of the applicable Pricing Supplement. In the case of Materialised Notes, either (i) the full text of these terms and conditions together with the relevant provisions of the applicable Pricing Supplement (as the same may be simplified by deletion of non-applicable terms) or (ii) the complete text of the terms and conditions, shall appear on the reverse side of the Physical Notes. All terms beginning with a capital letter and not defined in these Terms and Conditions shall have the meaning given to them in the applicable Pricing Supplement. References made in the Terms and Conditions to the Notes refer to the Notes of a single Series and not to all Notes as may be issued under the Programme. The Notes constitute bonds (obligations) as defined under French law.*

*The Pricing Supplement in relation to a tranche of Notes may specify other terms which replace or amend one or more of the provisions of the Terms and Conditions of the Notes below.*

The Notes are issued by the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône (the **Issuer** or the **Département des Bouches-du-Rhône**) in series (each a **Series**). The Notes shall be issued in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of this Offering Circular, as supplemented by the provisions of the relevant pricing supplement (the **Pricing Supplement**) supplementing this Offering Circular. The Notes of each Series are fungible. Each Series may be issued in tranches (each a **Tranche**). The terms and conditions of each Tranche shall be identical to the terms and conditions of the other Tranches of the same Series (other than the issue date, the issue price, the first interest payment and the nominal amount of the Tranche) and shall be set forth in the relevant Pricing Supplement. A fiscal agency agreement (as amended and supplemented, the **Fiscal Agency Agreement**) relating to the Notes was entered into on 10 October 2024 between the Issuer, BNP Paribas (acting through its Securities Services business) as fiscal agent and principal paying agent and the other agents appointed therein. The fiscal agent, the paying agents and the calculation agent(s) for the time being (where relevant) are referred to below respectively as the **Fiscal Agent**, the **Paying Agents** (such term including the Fiscal Agent) and the **Calculation Agent(s)**. Holders of interest coupons (**Coupons**) relating to interest-bearing Materialised Notes and, if applicable to such Notes, talons for additional Coupons (**Talons**) and the holders of receipts for instalments of principal paid on Materialised Notes (**Receipts**) are referred to respectively as **Couponholders and Receipt Holders**.

The term "**day**" in these Terms refers to a calendar day, unless specified otherwise.

Any reference below to **Article** refers to the numbered articles below, unless the context requires otherwise.

### 1. FORM, DENOMINATION AND TITLE

#### 1.1 Form

The Notes may be issued either in dematerialised form (**Dematerialised Notes**) or in materialised form (**Materialised Notes**), as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

- (a) Title to Dematerialised Notes is evidenced by entry in an account, in accordance with articles L. 211-3 *et seq.* and R. 211-1 *et seq.* of the French *Code monétaire et financier*. No physical document of title (including certificates of title in accordance with article R. 211-7 of the French *Code monétaire et financier*) shall be issued in respect of Dematerialised Notes.

Dematerialised Notes (as defined in articles L. 211-3 *et seq.* of the French *Code monétaire et financier*) are issued, at the option of the Issuer, either in bearer form, inscribed in the books of Euroclear France (acting as central depository) which shall credit the accounts of the

Account Holders, or in registered form, and in such case either, at the option of the relevant Noteholder, in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*), entered in the accounts of an Account Holder nominated by the relevant holder of the Notes, or in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*), entered in an account maintained by the Issuer or any registration agent (specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement) acting on behalf of the Issuer (the **Registration Agent**).

In these Terms, **Account Holder** means any intermediary authorised to hold securities accounts on behalf of its clients, directly or indirectly, with Euroclear France and includes Euroclear Bank SA/NV, as operator of the Euroclear system (**Euroclear**) and the depository bank for Clearstream Banking SA (**Clearstream**).

- (b) Materialised Notes are issued in bearer form only. Materialised Notes represented by physical notes (**Physical Notes**) are numbered in series and issued with Coupons (and, if applicable, with a **Talon**) attached, except in the case of Zero Coupon Notes in respect of which references to interest (except in relation to interest due after the Maturity Date), Coupons and Receipts in these Terms shall not apply. **Instalment Notes** are issued with one or more Receipts attached.

In accordance with articles L.211-3 *et seq.* of the French *Code monétaire et financier*, financial securities (such as Notes which constitute obligations as defined under French law) in materialised form and governed by French law must be issued outside France.

The Notes may be **Fixed Rate Notes, Floating Rate Notes, Fixed/Floating Rate Notes, Instalment Notes** and **Zero Coupon Notes**.

## 1.2 Denomination

The Notes shall be issued in the specified denomination(s) specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement (the **Specified Denomination(s)**). Dematerialised Notes must be issued in one single Specified Denomination.

The Notes shall be in a unitary denomination equal to or greater than 100,000 euros or any other greater amount as may be permitted or required by the relevant competent authority or under any laws or regulations applicable to the Specified Currency.

## 1.3 Title

- (a) Title to Dematerialised Notes in bearer form and in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*) passes, and such Notes may only be transferred, by registration of the transfer in the books of the Account Holders. Title to Dematerialised Notes in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*) passes, and such Notes may only be transferred, by registration of the transfer in the books held by the Issuer or the Registration Agent.
- (b) Title to Physical Notes with, if applicable, Receipts, Coupons and/or a Talon attached at issue, is transferred by delivery.
- (c) Except as ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction or as required by law, the holder (as defined below under paragraph (d)) of any Note, Coupon, Receipt or Talon shall be deemed to be and may be treated as its absolute owner for all purposes, whether or not it is overdue and regardless of any notice of ownership, or any right over or interest in such Note, Coupon, Receipt or Talon, any writing on it or its theft or loss and no person shall be liable for so treating the holder.

- (d) In these Terms:

**Noteholder** or, as appropriate, **holder of a Note(s)** means (i) in the case of Dematerialised Notes, the person whose name is recorded in the books of the relevant Account Holder, the Issuer or the Registration Agent (as applicable) as being the owner of such Notes, and (ii) in the case of Physical Notes, any holder of any Physical Note and the related Coupons, Receipts or Talons.

**Outstanding** means, in respect of Notes of any Series, all of the Notes in issue other than (i) those that have been redeemed in accordance with these Terms, (ii) those in respect of which the redemption date has passed and the redemption amount (including interest accrued on such Notes up to the redemption date (excluded) and all interest payable after such date) has been duly paid in accordance with the provisions of Article 6, (iii) those that are no longer valid or in respect of which the limitation period has expired, (iv) those that have been repurchased and cancelled in accordance with Article 5.8, (v) those that have been repurchased and retained in accordance with Article 5.7, (vi) in the case of Physical Notes, (A) all damaged or defaced Physical Notes that have been exchanged for replacement Physical Notes, (B) (for the sole purpose of determining the number of Physical Notes outstanding and without prejudice to their status for any other purpose) any allegedly lost, stolen or destroyed Physical Notes for which replacement Physical Notes have been issued and (C) any Temporary Global Certificate to the extent that it has been exchanged for one or more Physical Notes in accordance with its terms.

Terms beginning with a capital letter shall have the meaning given to them in the applicable Pricing Supplement. Where no definition is given, such term does not apply to the Notes.

## 2. CONVERSION AND EXCHANGE OF NOTES

### 2.1 Dematerialised Notes

- (a) Dematerialised Notes issued in bearer form cannot be converted into Dematerialised Notes in registered form, whether in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*) or in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*).
- (b) Dematerialised Notes issued in registered form cannot be converted into Dematerialised Notes in bearer form.
- (c) Dematerialised Notes issued in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*) may, at the option of the Noteholder, be converted into Notes in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*), and vice versa. Such option must be exercised by the Noteholder in accordance with article R.211-4 of the French *Code monétaire et financier*. Any costs relating to such conversion shall be borne by the relevant Noteholder.

### 2.2 Materialised Notes

Materialised Notes of a Specified Denomination cannot be exchanged for Materialised Notes of another Specified Denomination.

## 3. STATUS AND NEGATIVE PLEDGE

The Notes and, if applicable, related Receipts, Coupons and Talons, constitute direct, unconditional, unsubordinated and (subject to the paragraph below) unsecured obligations of the Issuer ranking (subject to mandatory exceptions imposed by law) equally between themselves and equally and rateably with all other present or future unsecured and unsubordinated obligations of the Issuer.

As long as the Notes or, if any, Receipts, Coupons or Talons attached to the Notes remain outstanding (as defined in Article 1.3(d) above), the Issuer shall not grant or permit to subsist any mortgage, pledge, lien or other form of security interest upon any assets or revenues, present or future, to secure any Indebtedness (as defined below) subscribe by the Issuer, unless the obligations of the Issuer under the Notes and, if any, the Coupons and Receipts benefit from equivalent and equal ranking security.

For the purpose of this Article, **Indebtedness** means any borrowing, present or future, represented by bonds, securities or other negotiable instruments with a maturity greater than one year and which are (or may be) admitted to trading on any market.

## 4. CALCULATION OF INTEREST AND OTHER CALCULATIONS

### 4.1 Definitions

In these Terms, unless the context requires otherwise, the terms defined below shall have the following meaning:

**Reference Banks** (*Banques de Référence*) means the institutions specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, if none is specified, four prime banks selected by the Calculation Agent on the interbank market (or if necessary, on the money market, the swaps market) with the closest connection to the Benchmark (which, if the relevant Benchmark is EURIBOR (TIBEUR in French) shall be the Euro-zone.

**Interest Period Commencement Date** (*Date de Début de Période d'Intérêts*) means the Issue Date of the Notes or any other date referred to in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Coupon Determination Date** (*Date de Détermination du Coupon*) means, in respect of an Interest Rate and an Interest Accrual Period, the date specified as such in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, if no date is specified the day falling two T2 Business Days before the first day of such Interest Accrual Period.

**Issue Date** (*Date d'Emission*) means, in respect of a Tranche, the settlement date of the Notes.

**Interest Payment Date** (*Date de Paiement du Coupon*) means the date(s) referred to in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Interest Accrual Period Date** (*Date de Période d'Intérêts Courus*) means each Interest Payment Date unless provided otherwise in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Relevant Date** (*Date de Référence*) means in respect of any Note, Receipt or Coupon, the date on which the amount payable under such Note, Receipt or Coupon becomes due and payable or (if any due and payable amount is not paid or not paid in time without any justification) the date on which the outstanding amount is paid in full or (in the case of Materialised Notes, if such date falls earlier) the day falling seven days after the date on which the holders of such Materialised Notes have been notified that, upon further presentation of such Materialised Note, Receipt or Coupon being made in accordance with the Terms and Conditions, such payment will be made, provided however that the payment is in fact made on such presentation.

**Effective Date** (*Date de Valeur*) means, in respect of a Floating Rate to be determined on any Coupon Determination Date, the date specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, or, if no date is specified, the first day of the Interest Accrual Period to which such Coupon Determination Date relates.

**FBF Definitions** (*Définitions FBF*) means the definitions referred to in the FBF Master Agreement of June 2013 relating to transactions on forward financial instruments, as supplemented by the



Technical Schedules, as published by the *Fédération Bancaire Française* (together the **FBF Master Agreement**) as amended or completed, as the case may be, at the Issue Date.

**Specified Currency** (*Devise Prévvue*) means, euro.

**Specified Duration** (*Durée Prévvue*) means, with respect to any Floating Rate to be determined by Screen Rate Determination on any Coupon Determination Date, the period specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, or if no period is specified, a period equal to the Interest Accrual Period, ignoring any adjustment pursuant to Article 4.3(b).

**Relevant Time** (*Heure de Référence*) means, with respect to any Coupon Determination Date, the local time in the Relevant Financial Centre specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, if no time is specified, the local time in the Relevant Financial Centre at which it is customary to determine bid and offered rates in respect of deposits in the Specified Currency on the interbank market in the Relevant Financial Centre. **Local time** means, with respect to Europe and the Euro-zone as a Relevant Financial Centre, 11.00 a.m. (Brussels time).

**Business Day** (*Jour Ouvré*) means:

- (a) for the Euro, a day on which the real time gross settlement system operated by the Eurosystem, or any successor or replacement system (**T2**), operates (a **T2 Business Day**); and/or
- (b) in the case of a Specified Currency and/or one or more business centre(s) specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement (the **Business Centre(s)**), a day (other than a Saturday or a Sunday) on which commercial banks and foreign exchange markets settle payments in the currency of the Business Centre(s) or, if no currency is specified, generally in each of the specified Business Centres.

**Margin** (*Marge*) means, for any Interest Accrual Period, the percentage or the number for the relevant Interest Accrual Period, as indicated in the relevant Pricing Supplement, being specified that it shall be positive, negative or zero.

**Day Count Fraction** (*Méthode de Décompte des Jours*) means, in respect of the calculation of an amount of coupon on any Note for any period of time (from (and including) the first day of such period to (but excluding) the last day in such period) (whether or not constituting an Interest Period, the **Calculation Period**):

- (a) if Actual/365 or Actual/365-FBF is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, it is the actual number of days in the Calculation Period divided by 365 (or, if any portion of that Calculation Period falls in a leap year, the sum of (i) the actual number of days in that portion of the Calculation Period falling in a leap year divided by 366 and (ii) the actual number of days in that portion of the Calculation Period falling in a non-leap year divided by 365);
- (b) if Actual/Actual-ICMA is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement:
  - (i) if the Calculation Period is equal to or shorter than the Determination Period during which it falls, the number of days in the Calculation Period divided by the product of (A) the number of days in such Determination Period and (B) the number of Determination Periods that would normally end in one year; and
  - (ii) if the Calculation Period is longer than the Determination Period, the sum:
    - (A) of the number of days in such Calculation Period falling in the Determination Period during which it begins, divided by the product (I) of the number of

days in such Determination Period and (II) the number of Determination Periods that would normally end in one year; and

- (B) the number of days in such Calculation Period falling in the following Determination Period, divided by the product (I) of the number of days in such Determination Period and (II) the number of Determination Periods that would normally end in one year,

in each case, **Determination Period** means the period beginning on a Coupon Determination Date (included) in any year and ending on the next Coupon Determination Date (excluded) and **Coupon Determination Date** means the date specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, or if no date is specified, the Interest Payment Date;

- (c) if **Actual/Actual - FBF** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the fraction of which the numerator is the actual number of days during such period and the denominator is 365 (or 366 if 29th February is included in the Calculation Period). If the Calculation Period is longer than one year, the basis shall be determined as follows:
  - (i) the number of complete years shall be counted back from the last day of the Calculation Period;
  - (ii) this number is increased by the fraction for the relevant period calculated as provided in the first paragraph of this definition;
- (d) if **Actual/365 (Fixed)** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the actual number of days in the Calculation Period divided by 365;
- (e) if **Actual/360** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the actual number of days in the Calculation Period divided by 360;
- (f) if **30/360, 360/360** or **Bond Basis** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the number of days in the Calculation Period divided by 360 (i.e. the number of days to be calculated based on a 360 day year of 12 months of 30 days each (unless (i) the last day of the Calculation Period is the thirty-first day of a month and the first day of the Calculation Period is a day other than the thirtieth or thirty-first day of a month, in which case the month in which the last day falls shall not be reduced to a thirty day month or (ii) the last day of the Calculation Period is the last day of the month of February, in which case the month of February shall not be extended to a thirty day month));
- (g) if **30/360 - FBF** or **Actual 30A/360 (American Bond Basis)** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, then, in respect of each Calculation Period, the fraction of which the denominator is 360 and the numerator is the number of days calculated in the same manner as the 30E/360 – FBF basis, except in the following case:

where the last day of the Calculation Period is the 31st and the first is neither a 30th nor a 31st, the last month of the Calculation Period shall be deemed to be a month of 31 days.

The fraction is: ,

$$\frac{\text{si}}{\text{jj}} = \frac{\text{31et}}{\text{jj}} = \frac{1}{\text{jj}} = (30,31)$$

then:

$$\frac{1}{360} \times \left[ (aa^2 - aa^1) \times 360 + (mm^2 - mm^1) \times 30 + (jj^2 - jj^1) \right]$$

otherwise:

$$\frac{1}{360} \times \left[ (aa^2 - aa^1) \times 360 + (mm^2 - mm^1) \times 30 + \text{Min}(jj^2, 30) - \text{Min}(jj^1, 30) \right]$$

where:

$D1(jj^1, mm^1, aa^1)$  is the commencement date of the period;

$D2(jj^2, mm^2, aa^2)$  is the end date of the period;

- (h) if **30E/360** or **Euro Bond Basis** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the number of days in the Calculation Period divided by 360 (the number of days to be calculated based on a 360 day year of 12 months of 30 days each, ignoring the date on which the first or last day of the Calculation Period falls, unless, in the case of a Calculation Period ending on the Maturity Date, the Maturity Date is the last day of the month of February, in which case the month of February shall not be extended to a thirty day month) and;
- (i) if **30E/360 – FBF** is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, then, in respect of each Calculation Period, the fraction of which the denominator is 360 and the numerator is the number of days in such period, calculated on the basis of a year of 12 months of 30 days, except in the following case:

If the last day of the Calculation Period is the last day of the month of February, the number of days in such month is the exact number of days.

Using the same defined terms as used for 30/360 - FBF, the fraction is:

$$\frac{1}{360} \times \left[ (aa^2 - aa^1) \times 360 + (mm^2 - mm^1) \times 30 + \text{Min}(jj^2, 30) - \text{Min}(jj^1, 30) \right]$$

**Coupon Amount** (*Montant de Coupon*) means the amount of interest due and, in the case of Fixed Rate Notes, the Fixed Coupon Amount or the Broken Amount, (as defined under Article 4.2), as the case may be, as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Representative Amount** (*Montant Donn e*) means, with respect to any Floating Rate to be determined in accordance with a Screen Rate Determination on a Coupon Determination Date, the amount specified as such on that date in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, if none is specified, an amount that is representative for a single transaction in the relevant market at the time.

**Screen Page** (*Page Ecran*) means any page, section, heading, column or any other part of a document supplied by any information service (including without limitation Thomson Reuters (**Reuters**)) as may be nominated to provide a Relevant Rate or any other page, section, heading, column or any other part of a document of such information service or any other information service as may replace it, in each case as nominated by the entity or organisation providing or responsible for the dissemination of the information appearing on such service to indicate rates or prices comparable to the Relevant Rate, as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Interest Period** (*P riode d'Int r ts*) means the period beginning on (and including) the Interest Period Commencement Date and ending on (but excluding) the first Interest Payment Date as well as each

subsequent period beginning on (and including) an Interest Payment Date and ending on (but excluding) the following Interest Payment Date.

**Interest Accrual Period** (*Période d'Intérêts Courus*) means the period beginning on (and including) the Interest Period Commencement Date and ending on (but excluding) the first Interest Accrual Period Date as well as each subsequent period beginning on (and including) an Interest Accrual Period Date and ending on (but excluding) the following Interest Accrual Period Date.

**Relevant Financial Centre** (*Place Financière de Référence*) means, in respect of a Floating Rate to be determined in accordance with a Screen Rate Determination on a Coupon Determination Date, such financial centre as may be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, if none is so specified, the financial centre with which the relevant Benchmark is most closely connected (which, in the case of EURIBOR (TIBEUR in French), shall be the Euro-zone or, failing which, Paris.

**Benchmark** (*Référence de Marché*) means the relevant rate (EURIBOR (or TIBEUR in French) or TEC10) as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Interest Rate** (*Taux d'Intérêt*) means the interest rate payable on the Notes and which is either specified or calculated in accordance with the provisions of these Terms, as supplemented by the applicable Pricing Supplement.

**Relevant Rate** (*Taux de Référence*) means, subject to adjustment in accordance with Article 4.3(c)(iii) and following, the Benchmark for a Representative Amount in the Specified Currency for a period equal to the Specified Duration commencing on the Effective Date (if such period is applicable to or compatible with the Benchmark).

**Euro-zone** (*Zone Euro*) means the region occupied by the Member States of the European Union that have adopted the single currency in accordance with the Treaty.

## 4.2 Interest on Fixed Rate Notes

Each Fixed Rate Note bears interest calculated on its outstanding nominal amount, as from the Interest Period Commencement Date, at an annual rate (expressed as a percentage) equal to the Interest Rate, payable in arrears on each Interest Payment Date.

If a fixed coupon amount (**Fixed Coupon Amount**) or broken amount (**Broken Amount**) is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the Coupon Amount payable on each Interest Payment Date shall be equal to the Fixed Coupon Amount or, if applicable, the Broken Amount as specified, it shall be payable on the Interest Payment Date(s) specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

## 4.3 Interest on Floating Rate Notes

### (a) Interest Payment Dates

Each Floating Rate Note shall bear interest calculated on its unredeemed nominal amount, as from the Interest Period Commencement Date, at an annual rate (expressed as a percentage) equal to the Interest Rate, payable in arrears on each Interest Payment Date. Such Interest Payment Date(s) shall be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, if no Interest Payment Date(s) is/are specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, Interest Payment Date shall mean each date falling at the end of such number of months or at the end of such other period as is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement as being the Interest Period, falling after the preceding Interest Payment Date and, in the case of the first Interest Payment Date, after the Interest Period Commencement Date.

(b) **Business Day Convention**

If any date referred to in these Terms, that is specified to be subject to adjustment in accordance with a Business Day Convention, would otherwise fall on a day that is not a Business Day, then, if the applicable Business Day Convention is (i) the Floating Rate Business Day Convention, such date shall be postponed to the next day that is a Business Day unless it would thereby fall into the next calendar month, in which event (x) such date shall be brought forward to the immediately preceding Business Day and (y) each such subsequent date shall be the last Business Day of the month in which such date would have fallen had it not been subject to adjustment, (ii) the Following Business Day Convention, such date shall be postponed to the next day that is a Business Day, (iii) the Modified Following Business Day Convention, such date shall be postponed to the next day that is a Business Day unless it would thereby fall into the next calendar month, in which event such date shall be brought forward to the immediately preceding Business Day or (iv) the Preceding Business Day Convention, such date shall be brought forward to the immediately preceding Business Day. Notwithstanding the above, if the applicable Pricing Supplement specify that the Business Day Convention shall be applied on a "non-adjusted" basis, the Coupon Amount payable on any date shall not be affected by application of the relevant Business Day Convention.

(c) **Interest Rate for Floating Rate Notes**

The Interest Rate applicable to Floating Rate Notes for each Interest Accrual Period shall be determined in compliance with the provisions below relating to either FBF Determination or Screen Rate Determination, as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

(i) **FBF Determination for Floating Rate Notes**

Where FBF Determination is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement as being the method applicable for the determination of the Interest Rate, the Interest Rate applicable to each Interest Accrual Period shall be determined by the Agent as being a rate equal to the relevant FBF Rate plus or minus, as the case may be (as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement), the Margin. For the purposes of this sub-paragraph (i), "FBF Rate" in respect of an Interest Accrual Period means a rate equal to the Floating Rate as determined by the Agent for a swap transaction entered into in the Specified Currency and incorporating the FBF Definitions and under the terms of which:

- (A) the relevant Floating Rate is as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement; and
- (B) the Floating Rate Determination Date is as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

For the purposes of this sub-paragraph (i) "Floating Rate", "Agent", and "Floating Rate Determination Date" shall have the meanings given thereto in the FBF Definitions.

If the paragraph "Floating Rate" in the applicable Pricing Supplement provides that the interest rate will be determined by linear interpolation in respect of an Interest Period, the Interest Rate applicable to such Interest Period will be calculated by the Calculation Agent by linear interpolation between two (2) rates based on the relevant Floating Rate, provided that the first interest rate corresponds to a maturity immediately inferior to the duration of the relevant Interest Period and the second rate corresponds to a maturity immediately superior to the same relevant Interest Period.

(ii) **Screen Rate Determination for Floating Rate Notes**

Where Screen Rate Determination is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement as being the method applicable for the determination of the Interest Rate, the Interest Rate for each Interest Accrual Period shall be determined by the Calculation Agent at (or about) the Relevant Time on the Coupon Determination Date relating to such Interest Accrual Period as specified below:

- (A) if the primary source for the Floating Rate is a Screen Page, subject as provided below or (if applicable) Article 4.3(c)(iii) (Benchmark discontinuation) below, the Interest Rate shall be:
  - I. the Relevant Rate (where such Relevant Rate on such Screen Page is a composite quotation or is customarily supplied by one entity), or
  - II. the arithmetic mean of the Relevant Rates of the entities whose Relevant Rates appear on that Screen Page,

in each case as published on such Screen Page, at the Relevant Time on the Coupon Determination Date as indicated in the applicable Pricing Supplement, decreased or increased, if appropriate (as indicated in the relevant Pricing Supplement), by the Margin;

- (B) if the primary source for the Floating Rate is Reference Banks or if subparagraph (A)(I) above applies and no Relevant Rate appears on the Screen Page at the Relevant Time on the Coupon Determination Date or if subparagraph (A)(II) above applies and fewer than two Relevant Rates appear on the Screen Page at the Relevant Time on the Coupon Determination Date, the Interest Rate, subject as provided below, or subject (if applicable) to Article 4.3(c)(iii) (Benchmark discontinuation) below, shall be equal to the arithmetic mean of the Relevant Rates that each of the Reference Banks is quoting to leading banks in the Relevant Financial Centre at the Relevant Time on the Coupon Determination Date, as determined by the Calculation Agent, decreased or increased, if appropriate (as indicated in the relevant Pricing Supplement), by the Margin; and
- (C) if paragraph (B) above applies and the Calculation Agent determines that fewer than two Reference Banks are so quoting Relevant Rates, the Interest Rate shall, subject as provided below, or subject (if applicable) to Article 4.3(c)(iii) (Benchmark discontinuation) below, be the arithmetic mean of the rates per annum (expressed as a percentage) that the Calculation Agent determines to be the rates (being the nearest equivalent to the Benchmark) in respect of a Representative Amount of the Specified Currency that at least two out of five leading banks selected by the Calculation Agent in the Eurozone (the **Principal Financial Centre**) are quoting at or about the Relevant Time on the date on which such banks would customarily quote such rates for a period beginning on the Effective Date for a period equivalent to the Specified Duration (I) to leading banks carrying on business in Europe, or (if the Calculation Agent determines that fewer than two of such banks are so quoting to leading banks in Europe) (II) to leading banks carrying on business in the Principal Financial Centre; except that, if fewer than two of such banks are so quoting to leading banks in the Principal Financial Centre, the Interest Rate shall be the Interest Rate determined on the previous Coupon Determination Date (after readjustment for any difference between any

Margin, Rate Multiplier or Maximum or Minimum Interest Rate applicable to the preceding Interest Accrual Period and to the relevant Interest Accrual Period).

If the paragraph "Benchmark" in the applicable Pricing Supplement provides that the interest rate will be determined by linear interpolation in respect of an Interest Period, the Interest Rate applicable to this Interest Period will be calculated by the Calculation Agent by linear interpolation between two (2) interest rates based on the applicable Benchmark, where the first rate corresponds to a maturity immediately inferior to the duration of the relevant Interest Period and the second rate corresponds to a maturity immediately superior to the same Interest Period.

- (D) When a Screen Rate Determination is indicated in the relevant Pricing Supplement as the method used to determine the Interest Rate and that the Relevant Rate relating to Floating Rate Notes is specified as the TEC10, the Interest Rate for each Interest Accrual Period, subject to the provisions as set forth above, shall be determined by the Calculation Agent, based on the following formulae:

$$\text{TEC10} + \text{Margin.}$$

"TEC10" refers to the free valuation (expressed as a percentage per year) for the EUR-TEC10-CNO calculated by the French Bond Association (*Comité de Normalisation Obligataire* - "CNO"), listed on the relevant Screen Page which is the row "TEC10" on the Reuters Screen Page CNOTEC10 or any successor page, at 10 a.m. Paris Time, on the relevant Coupon Determination Date.

If, during any Coupon Determination Date, the TEC10 does not display on the Reuters Screen Page CNOTEC or any successor page, (i) the Calculation Agent shall determine it on the basis of the mid-market exchange rate for each of the two French Treasury Bills (*Obligation Assimilable du Trésor* – "OAT") references which would have been used by the CNO for calculation of the applicable rate, in each case assessed by five Primary dealers (which are the market counterparties of choice for the Agency *France Trésor* and the *Caisse de la dette publique* for most of their activities on the markets, and which have the responsibility to participate in auctions, to invest Treasury issues and to maintain the liquidity of the secondary market), around 10 a.m. Paris Time, at the relevant Coupon Determination Date; (ii) the Calculation Agent shall ask to each Primary dealer to provide the price yield valuation; and (iii) the TEC10 shall be the yield to call of the arithmetic mean of such prices, which is determined by the Calculation Agent after elimination of both the highest and the lowest estimate. The yield to call as mentioned earlier shall be determined by the Calculation Agent in accordance with the formulae that has been used by the CNO to determine the relevant rate.

*For information purposes, the EUR-TEC10-CNO, established in 1996, is the performance percentage (which is rounded to the nearest cent and 0,005 per cent being rounded up to the 100<sup>th</sup> above) of an OAT notional to 10 years corresponding to the linear interpolation between yield to maturity of the two existing OAT (the "Reference OAT") whose periods until maturity are the closest in duration of the notional OAT to 10 years, the duration of a Reference OAT being under 10 years and the duration of the other Reference OAT being 10 years or more.*

(iii) **Benchmark discontinuation**

When Screen Rate Determination is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement as the method for determining the Rate of Interest, and if a Benchmark Event occurs in relation to an Original Reference Rate at any time when the Terms and Conditions of any Notes provide for any remaining rate of interest (or any component part thereof) to be determined by reference to such Original Reference Rate, then the following provisions shall apply and shall prevail over other fallbacks specified in Condition 4.3(c)(ii).

(A) Independent Adviser

The Issuer shall use reasonable endeavours to appoint an Independent Adviser, as soon as reasonably practicable, to determine a Successor Rate, failing which an Alternative Rate (in accordance with Condition 4.3(c)(iii)(B)) and, in either case, an Adjustment Spread, if any (in accordance with Condition 4.3(c)(iii)(C)) and any Benchmark Amendments (in accordance with Condition 4.3(c)(iii)(D)).

An Independent Adviser appointed pursuant to this Condition 4.3(c)(iii) shall act in good faith as an expert and (in the absence of bad faith or fraud) shall have no liability whatsoever to the Issuer, the Fiscal Agent, the Paying Agents, the Calculation Agent or any other party responsible for determining the Rate of Interest specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, or the Noteholders for any determination made by it pursuant to this Condition 4.3(c)(iii).

(B) Successor Rate or Alternative Rate

If the Independent Adviser determines in good faith that:

I. there is a Successor Rate, then such Successor Rate shall (subject to adjustment as provided in Condition 4.3(c)(iii)(C)) subsequently be used in place of the Original Reference Rate to determine the relevant Rate(s) of Interest (or the relevant component part(s) thereof) for all relevant future payments of interest on the Notes (subject to the further operation of this Condition 4.3(c)(iii)); or

II. there is no Successor Rate but that there is an Alternative Rate, then such Alternative Rate shall (subject to adjustment as provided in Condition 4.3(c)(iii)(C)) subsequently be used in place of the Original Reference Rate to determine the relevant Rate(s) of Interest (or the relevant component part(s) thereof) for all relevant future payments of interest on the Notes (subject to the further operation of this Article 4.3(c)(iii)).

(C) Adjustment Spread

If the Independent Adviser, determines in good faith (i) that an Adjustment Spread is required to be applied to the Successor Rate or the Alternative Rate (as the case may be) and (ii) the quantum of, or a formula or methodology for determining, such Adjustment Spread, then such Adjustment Spread shall be applied to the Successor Rate or the Alternative Rate (as the case may be) for each subsequent determination of a relevant Rate of Interest (or a relevant component part thereof) by reference to such Successor Rate or Alternative Rate (as applicable).



(D) Benchmark Amendments

If any Successor Rate, Alternative Rate or Adjustment Spread is determined in accordance with this Article 4.3(c)(iii) and the Independent Adviser determines in good faith (A) that amendments to the Terms and Conditions of the Notes (including, without limitation, amendments to the definitions of Day Count Fraction, Business Days or Screen Page) are necessary to ensure the proper operation of such Successor Rate, Alternative Rate and/or Adjustment Spread (such amendments, the **Benchmark Amendments**) and (B) the terms of the Benchmark Amendments, then the Issuer shall, subject to giving notice thereof in accordance with Article 4.3(c)(iii)(E), without any requirement for the consent or approval of Noteholders, vary the Terms and Conditions of the Notes to give effect to such Benchmark Amendments with effect from the date specified in such notice.

In connection with any such variation in accordance with this Article 4.3(c)(iii), the Issuer shall comply with the rules of any stock exchange on which the Notes are for the time being listed or admitted to trading.

(E) Notices, etc.

The Issuer shall, after receiving such information from the Independent Adviser, notify the Fiscal Agent, the Calculation Agent, the Paying Agents, the Representative (if any) and, in accordance with Article 13, the Noteholders, promptly of any Successor Rate, Alternative Rate, Adjustment Spread and the specific terms of any Benchmark Amendments, determined under this Article 4.3(c)(iii). Such notice shall be irrevocable and shall specify the effective date of the Benchmark Amendments, if any.

(F) Fallbacks

If, following the occurrence of a Benchmark Event and in relation to the determination of the Rate of Interest on the immediately following Coupon Determination Date, no Independent Adviser has been appointed or no Successor Rate or Alternative Rate (as applicable) is determined pursuant to this provision, the Original Reference Rate will continue to apply for the purposes of determining such Rate of Interest on such Coupon Determination Date, with the effect that the fallback provisions provided elsewhere in these Terms and Conditions will continue to apply to such determination.

In such circumstances, the Issuer will be entitled (but not obliged), at any time thereafter, to elect to re-apply the provisions of this Article 4.3(c)(iii), *mutatis mutandis*, on one or more occasions until a Successor Rate or Alternative Rate (and, if applicable, any associated Adjustment Spread and/or Benchmark Amendments) has been determined and notified in accordance with this Article 4.3(c)(iii) (and, until such determination and notification (if any), the fallback provisions provided elsewhere in these Terms and Conditions including, for the avoidance of doubt, the other fallbacks specified in Article 4.3(c)(ii), will continue to apply in accordance with their terms.

(G) Definitions

In this Article 4.3(c)(iii):

**Adjustment Spread** means either a spread (which may be positive or negative), or the formula or methodology for calculating a spread, in either case, which the Independent Adviser determines and which is required to be applied to the Successor Rate or the Alternative Rate (as the case may be) to reduce or eliminate, to the fullest extent reasonably practicable in the circumstances, any economic prejudice or benefit (as the case may be) to Noteholders as a result of the replacement of the Original Reference Rate with the Successor Rate or the Alternative Rate (as the case may be) and is the spread, formula or methodology which:

- a) in the case of a Successor Rate, is formally recommended, or formally provided as an option for parties to adopt, in relation to the replacement of the Original Reference Rate with the Successor Rate by any Relevant Nominating Body;
- b) in the case of an Alternative Rate (or in the case of a Successor Rate where (a) above does not apply), is in customary market usage in the international debt capital market for transactions which reference the Original Reference Rate, where such rate has been replaced by the Alternative Rate (or, as the case may be, the Successor Rate); or
- c) if no such recommendation or option has been made (or made available), or the Independent Adviser determines there is no such spread, formula or methodology in customary market usage, the Independent Adviser, acting in good faith, determines to be appropriate.

**Independent Adviser** means an independent financial institution of international repute or an independent adviser of recognised standing with appropriate expertise appointed by the Issuer at its own expense under Article 4.3(c)(iii)(A);

**Benchmark Event** means, with respect to an Original Reference Rate:

- a) the Original Reference Rate ceasing to exist or be published;
- b) later of (i) the making of a public statement by the administrator of the Original Reference Rate that it will, on or before a specified date, cease publishing the Original Reference Rate permanently or indefinitely (in circumstances where no successor administrator has been appointed that will continue publication of the Original Reference Rate) and (ii) the date falling six months prior to the date specified in (i);
- c) the making of a public statement by the supervisor of the administrator of the Original Reference Rate that the Original Reference Rate has been permanently or indefinitely discontinued;
- d) the later of (i) the making of a public statement by the supervisor of the administrator of the Original Reference Rate that the Original Reference Rate will, on or before a specified date, be permanently or

indefinitely discontinued and (ii) the date falling six months prior to the date specified in (i);

- e) the making of a public statement by the supervisor of the administrator of the Original Reference Rate that means the Original Reference Rate will be prohibited from being used or that its use will be subject to restrictions or adverse consequences, in each case within the following six months;
- f) it has or will prior to the next Coupon Determination Date, become unlawful for the Issuer, the party responsible for determining the Rate of Interest (being the Calculation Agent or such other party specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, as applicable), or any Paying Agent to calculate any payments due to be made to any Noteholder using the Original Reference Rate (including, without limitation, under the benchmarks regulation (EU) 2016/1011, as amended (the **Benchmarks Regulation**); or
- g) that a decision to withdraw the authorisation or registration, pursuant to article 35 of the Benchmarks Regulation, of any benchmark administrator previously authorised to publish such Original Reference Rate has been adopted; or
- h) the making of a public statement by the supervisor of the administrator of the Original Reference Rate that the Original Reference Rate, in the opinion of the supervisor, is no longer representative of an underlying market or that its method of calculation has significantly changed.

**Relevant Nominating Body** means, in respect of a benchmark or screen rate (as applicable):

- a) the central bank for the currency to which the benchmark or screen rate (as applicable) relates, or any central bank or other supervisory authority which is responsible for supervising the administrator of the benchmark or screen rate (as applicable); or
- b) any working group or committee sponsored by, chaired or co-chaired by or constituted at the request of (i) the central bank of the currency to which the benchmark rate or the screen rate (if any) relates, (ii) any central bank or other supervisory authority responsible for supervising the administrator of the benchmark rate or the screen rate (if any); (iii) a group of the foregoing central banks or any other supervisory authority or (iv) the Financial Stability Board or any part thereof.

**Alternative Rate** means an alternative benchmark rate or alternative screen rate that the Independent Adviser determines in accordance with Clause 4.3(c)(iii) and that corresponds to market practice in international bond markets for the purposes of determining interest rates (or a relevant component thereof) for a corresponding interest period and in the same Specified Currency as the Notes.

**Original Reference Rate** means the benchmark or screen rate (as applicable) originally specified for the purpose of determining the relevant Rate of Interest (or any relevant component part(s) thereof) on the Notes.

**Successor Rate** means a successor to or replacement of the Original Reference Rate which is formally recommended by any Relevant Nominating Body.

#### **4.4 Fixed Interest Rate/Floating Interest Rate of the Notes**

Each Fixed/Floating Rate Note bears interest at a rate which, on the date provided for in the relevant Pricing Supplement (the **Change of Interest Basis Date**):

- (i) may be converted at the option of the Issuer from a fixed rate to a floating rate (among the types of Floating Rate Notes referred to in Article 4.3) (or vice versa) (the **Change of Interest Basis at the Issuer's Discretion**), it being specified that the Change of Interest Basis at the Issuer's Discretion shall be deemed applicable after notice sent to the Holders by the Issuer within the period specified in the relevant Pricing Supplement in accordance with Article 14; or
- (ii) shall be automatically converted from a fixed rate to a floating rate (among the types of Floating Rate Notes referred to in Article 4.3) (or vice versa) (the **Automatic Change of Interest Basis**).

If the Change of Interest Basis Date specified in the relevant Pricing Supplement is not a Business Day, then such date shall be the following day that is a Business Day, unless that day falls in the next calendar month, in which case that date will be the first preceding day that is a Business Day.

#### **4.5 Zero Coupon Notes**

Where a Zero Coupon Note is redeemable prior to its Maturity Date by exercise of an Option of Redemption at the discretion of the Issuer or, if so specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, pursuant to Article 5.4 or in any other manner, and such Note is not redeemed on the due date, the amount due and payable prior to the Maturity Date shall be the Optional Redemption Amount or the Early Redemption Amount, as the case may be. As from the Maturity Date, the overdue principal of such Note shall bear interest at a rate *per annum* (expressed as a percentage) equal to the Amortisation Yield (as defined in Article 5.4(a)(ii)).

#### **4.6 Accrual of interest**

Interest shall cease to accrue on each Note on the due date for redemption unless (a) on such due date, in the case of Dematerialised Notes or (b) upon due presentation, in the case of Materialised Notes, repayment of principal is improperly withheld or refused; in which event interest shall continue to accrue (after as well as before judgment) at the Interest Rate in the manner provided in Article 4 up to the Relevant Date.

#### **4.7 Margin, Rate Multipliers, Interest Rate, Instalment Amount, Minimum and Maximum Redemption Amounts and Rounding**

- (a) If a Margin or Rate Multiplier is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement (either (x) generally or (y) in relation to one or more Interest Accrual Periods), an adjustment shall be made to all Interest Rates, in the case of (x), or the Interest Rates applicable to the relevant Interest Accrual Periods, in the case of (y), calculated in accordance with paragraph (c) above by adding (if a positive number) or subtracting (if a negative number) the absolute value of such Margin or by multiplying the Interest Rate by such Rate Multiplier, subject always to the provisions of the following paragraph.
- (b) If any Minimum or Maximum Interest Rate, Instalment Amount or Redemption Amount is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, then any Interest Rate, Instalment Amount or Redemption Amount shall be subject to such maximum or minimum, as the case may be. it be specified that (i) in

no case shall the interest amount payable for each Note be less than zero and (ii) unless a higher Minimum Interest Rate is provided in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the Minimum Interest Rate shall be 0.

- (c) For the purposes of any calculations required pursuant to these Terms (unless otherwise specified), (i) if FBF Determination is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, all percentages resulting from such calculations shall be rounded, if necessary, to the nearest ten thousandth of a percentage point (with halves being rounded up) (ii) all percentages resulting from such calculations shall be rounded, if necessary, to the nearest fifth decimal place (with halves being rounded up), and (iii) all figures shall be rounded to seven significant figures (with halves being rounded up).

#### **4.8 Calculations**

The amount of interest payable in respect of any Note for any period shall be calculated by multiplying the product of the Interest Rate and the outstanding nominal amount of such Note by the Day Count Fraction, unless a Coupon Amount (or a Margin or Rate Multiplier) is specified in respect of such period, in which case the amount of interest payable in respect of such Note for such period shall be equal to such Coupon Amount (or be adjusted in accordance with the Margin or a Rate Multiplier as specified in Article 4.7 above). Where any Interest Period comprises two or more Interest Accrual Periods, the amount of interest payable in respect of such Interest Period shall be the sum of the amounts of interest payable in respect of each of those Interest Accrual Periods.

#### **4.9 Determination and publication of Interest Rates, Coupon Amounts, Final Redemption Amounts, Early Redemption Amounts, Optional Redemption Amounts and Instalment Amounts**

As soon as practicable after the relevant time on such date as the Calculation Agent may be required to calculate any rate or amount, obtain any quotation or make any determination or calculation, it shall determine such rate and calculate the Coupon Amounts in respect of each Specified Denomination of the Notes for the relevant Interest Accrual Period. It shall also calculate the Final Redemption Amount, Early Redemption Amount, Optional Redemption Amount or Instalment Amount, obtain such quotation or make such determination or calculation, as the case may be. It shall then cause the Interest Rate and the Coupon Amounts for each Interest Period and the relevant Interest Payment Date and, if required, the Final Redemption Amount, Early Redemption Amount or any Optional Redemption Amount or any other Instalment Amount to be notified to the Fiscal Agent, the Issuer, each of the Paying Agents and any other Calculation Agent appointed in respect of the Notes that is to make a further calculation upon receipt of such information. If the Notes are admitted to trading on a regulated market and the rules of such market so require, it shall also notify such information to such market and/or the Noteholders as soon as possible after their determination but in no event later than (i) the commencement of the relevant Interest Period, if determined prior to such time, in the case of notification to such market of an Interest Rate and Coupon Amount, or (ii) in all other cases, no later than the fourth Business Day after such determination. Where any Interest Payment Date or Interest Accrual Period Date is subject to adjustment pursuant to Article 4.3(b), the Coupon Amounts and the Interest Payment Date so published may subsequently be amended (or appropriate alternative arrangements made by way of adjustment) without notice in the event of an extension or shortening of the Interest Period. The determination of any rate or amount, the obtaining of each quotation and the making of each determination or calculation by the Calculation Agent(s) shall (in the absence of manifest error) be final and binding upon all parties.

#### **4.10 Calculation Agent and Reference Banks**

The Issuer shall procure that there shall at all times be four Reference Banks (or such other number as may be required) with at least one office in the Relevant Financial Centre and one or more Calculation Agents if so specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement and for so long as any Note is outstanding (as defined in Article 1.3(c) above). If any Reference Bank (acting through its relevant office) is unable

or unwilling to continue to act as a Reference Bank, then the Issuer shall appoint another Reference Bank with an office in the Relevant Financial Centre to act as such in its place. Where more than one Calculation Agent is appointed in respect of the Notes, references in these Terms to the Calculation Agent shall be construed as a reference to each Calculation Agent performing its respective duties under these Terms. If the Calculation Agent is unable or unwilling to act as such or if the Calculation Agent fails duly to establish the Interest Rate for an Interest Period or Interest Accrual Period or to calculate any Coupon Amount, Instalment Amount, Final Redemption Amount, Optional Redemption Amount or Early Redemption Amount, as the case may be, or to comply with any other requirement, the Issuer shall appoint a leading bank or investment bank operating in the interbank market (or, if appropriate, money market, swaps market or over-the-counter index options market) that is most closely connected with the calculation or determination to be made by the Calculation Agent (acting through its principal Paris office or any other office actively involved in such market) to act as such in its place. The Calculation Agent may not resign its duties without a successor having been appointed in the manner described above.

## **5. REDEMPTION, PURCHASE AND OPTIONS**

### **5.1 Redemption at maturity**

Unless previously redeemed or purchased and cancelled as provided below, each Note shall be finally redeemed on the Maturity Date specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement at its Final Redemption Amount (which, unless provided otherwise, is equal to its nominal amount (except for Zero Coupon Notes)) as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement or, in the case of Notes to which Article 5.2 below applies, to its last Instalment Amount.

### **5.2 Redemption by Instalments**

Unless previously redeemed or purchased and cancelled as provided in this Article 5, each Note that provides for Instalment Dates and Instalment Amounts shall be partially redeemed on each Instalment Date at the related Instalment Amount specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. The outstanding principal amount of each such Note shall be reduced by the Instalment Amount (or, if such Instalment Amount is calculated by reference to a proportion of the principal amount of such Note, such proportion) for all purposes with effect from the related Instalment Date, unless payment of the Instalment Amount is improperly withheld or refused (i) in the case of Dematerialised Notes, on the scheduled payment date or (ii) in the case of Materialised Notes, on presentation of the related Receipt, in which case, such amount shall remain outstanding until the Relevant Date relating to such Instalment Amount.

### **5.3 Redemption at the option of the Issuer and partial redemption**

If Issuer Call is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the Issuer may, subject to compliance by the Issuer with all applicable laws, regulations and directives, and on giving not less than 15 and not more than 30 days' irrevocable notice to the Noteholders in accordance with Article 14 (or any other notice specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement), redeem all or, if so provided, some of the Notes, as the case may be, on any Optional Redemption Date, as the case may be. Any such redemption of Notes shall be at their Optional Redemption Amount, specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, together with interest accrued to the date fixed for redemption (excluded). Any such redemption or exercise must relate to Notes of a nominal amount at least equal to the minimum nominal amount to be redeemed as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement and no greater than the maximum nominal amount to be redeemed as specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

All Notes in respect of which any such notice is given shall be redeemed on the date specified in such notice in accordance with this Article.

In the case of a partial redemption by the Issuer in respect of Materialised Notes, the notice to holders of such Materialised Notes must also indicate the number of Physical Notes to be redeemed or in respect of which such option has been exercised. The Notes must have been selected in such manner as is fair and objective in the circumstances, taking account of prevailing market practices and in accordance with all applicable stock market laws and regulations.

In the case of a partial redemption or partial exercise of an Issuer's option in respect of Dematerialised Notes of any one Series, the redemption shall be made by the application of a *pool factor* (meaning a reduction of the nominal amount of such Dematerialised Notes pro rata the nominal amount redeemed).

#### **5.4 Redemption at the option of the Noteholders**

If Investor Put is specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, the Issuer shall, at the request of the holder of any such Note and upon giving not less than 15 and not more than 30 days' irrevocable notice (or any other notice specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement) to the Issuer, redeem such Note on the Optional Redemption Date(s) at its Optional Redemption Amount, specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, together with interest accrued to the date fixed for redemption (excluded). In order to exercise such option, the Noteholder must deposit with a Paying Agent at its specified office by the required deadline a duly completed option exercise notice (the **Exercise Notice**) in the form obtainable during normal office hours from the Paying Agent or Registration Agent, as the case may be. In the case of Materialised Notes, the relevant Notes (together with all unmatured Receipts and Coupons and unexchanged Talons) must be attached to the Exercise Notice. In the case of Dematerialised Notes, the Noteholder shall transfer, or cause to be transferred, the Dematerialised Notes to be redeemed to the account of the Paying Agent, as specified in the Exercise Notice. No option that has been exercised or, if relevant, no Note that has been deposited or transferred may be withdrawn without the prior written consent of the Issuer.

#### **5.5 Early redemption**

##### **(a) Zero Coupon Notes**

- (i) The Early Redemption Amount payable in respect of any Zero Coupon Note shall, upon redemption of such Note pursuant to Article 5.6 or 5.9 or upon it becoming due and payable as provided in Article 8, be the Amortised Face Amount (calculated as provided below) of such Note.
- (ii) Subject to the provisions of sub-paragraph (iii) below, the Amortised Face Amount of any such Zero Coupon Note shall be the scheduled Final Redemption Amount of such Note on the Maturity Date discounted at a rate per annum (expressed as a percentage) equal to the Amortisation Yield (which, if there is no indication of a rate in the applicable Pricing Supplement, shall be such rate as would result in an Amortised Face Amount equal to the issue price of the Notes if discounted back to their issue price on the Issue Date) compounded annually.
- (iii) (iii) If the Early Redemption Amount payable in respect of each Note upon its redemption pursuant to Article 5.6 or 5.9 or upon it becoming due and payable in accordance with Article 8, is not paid when due, the Early Redemption Amount due and payable in respect of such Note shall be the Amortised Face Amount of such Note, as defined in sub-paragraph (ii) above, except that such sub-paragraph shall have effect as if the reference therein to the date on which such Note becomes due and payable were a reference to the Relevant Date. The calculation of the Amortised Face Amount in accordance with this sub-paragraph shall continue to be made (as well after as before any judgment) until the Relevant Date, unless the Relevant Date falls on or

after the Maturity Date, in which case the amount due and payable shall be the scheduled Final Redemption Amount of such Note on the Maturity Date, together with any interest that may accrue in accordance with Article 4.4. Where such calculation is to be made for a period of less than one (1) year, it shall be made on the basis of one of the Day Count Fractions mentioned at Article 4.1 and specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.

(b) **Other Notes**

The Early Redemption Amount due for any other securities, upon its redemption pursuant to Article 5.6 or 5.9 or upon it becoming due and payable pursuant to Article 8, shall be equal to the Final Redemption Amount, unless otherwise specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, or in the case of Notes governed by Article 5.2 above, at the unamortised face amount, in each case, plus all accrued interest (including, if applicable, any additional amounts) until the effective date of redemption (excluded).

**5.6 Redemption for tax reasons**

- (a) If, at the time of any redemption of principal or payment of interest or other proceeds, the Issuer is obliged to pay additional amounts in accordance with Article 7.2 below, by reason of any change in or amendment to the laws and regulations in France, or any change in the official application or interpretation thereof, made after the Issue Date, unless such relevant obligations to make additional payments can be avoided by reasonable measures taken by the Issuer, to the Issuer may (having given notice to the Noteholders in accordance with Article 14, at the earliest 45 days and at the latest 30 days prior to such payment (which notice shall be irrevocable)) redeem, on any Interest Payment Date or, if specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, at any time, all but not some only of the Notes at the Early Redemption Amount together with, all interest accrued until the date fixed for redemption (excluded), provided that the due date for redemption of which notice hereunder shall be given shall not be earlier than the latest practicable date on which the Issuer could make a payment of principal, interest or other proceeds without withholding or deductions for French taxes.
- (b) If, on the occasion of the next redemption of principal or payment of interest or other proceeds in respect of the Notes, Receipts or Coupons, the Issuer would be prevented by French law from making payment of the full amount then due and payable to the Noteholders, notwithstanding the undertaking to pay additional amounts in accordance with Article 7.2 below, the Issuer shall forthwith give notice of such fact to the Fiscal Agent. The Issuer shall, having given seven days' notice to the Noteholders in accordance with Article 14, redeem all, and not some only, of the Notes then outstanding at their Early Redemption Amount, together with all interest accrued up to the date fixed for redemption (excluded), on (i) the latest practicable Interest Payment Date on which the Issuer could make payment of the full amount due and payable on the Notes, Receipts or Coupons, provided that if the notice referred to above would expire after such Interest Payment Date, the date for redemption to the Noteholders shall be the later of (A) the latest practicable date on which the Issuer could make payment of the full amount then due and payable on the Notes, Receipts or Coupons and (B) 14 days after giving notice to the Fiscal Agent or (ii) if so specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement, at any time, provided that the due date for redemption of which notice hereunder is given shall be the latest practicable date on which the Issuer could make payment of the full amount due and payable in respect of the Notes and, if relevant, any Receipts or Coupons or, if that date is passed, as soon as practicable thereafter.

**5.7 Purchases**

The Issuer may at any time purchase Notes on the stock market or otherwise (including pursuant to a public offer) at any price (provided however that, in the case of Materialised Notes, all unmatured



Receipts or Coupons, and all unexchanged Talons relating thereto, are attached to or surrendered with such Materialised Notes), in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Notes purchased by or on behalf of the Issuer may, at the option of the Issuer, be retained in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory provisions, or cancelled in accordance with Article 5.8.

## **5.8 Cancellation**

Notes purchased for cancellation in accordance with Article 5.7 above shall be cancelled, in the case of Dematerialised Notes, by transfer to an account pursuant to the rules and procedures of Euroclear France, and in the case of Materialised Notes, by delivery to the Fiscal Agent of the relevant Temporary Global Certificate or the Physical Notes in question, together with all unmatured Receipts and Coupons and all unexchanged Talons attached to such Notes, if relevant, and in each case, if so transferred and surrendered, all such Notes shall, together with all Notes redeemed by the Issuer, be cancelled forthwith (together with, in the case of Dematerialised Notes, all rights in respect of payment of interest and other amounts in respect of such Dematerialised Notes and, in the case of Materialised Notes, all unmatured Receipts and Coupons and all unexchanged Talons attached thereto or surrendered therewith). Any Notes so cancelled or, as the case may be, transferred or surrendered for cancellation may not be re-issued or re-sold and the obligations of the Issuer in respect of any such Notes shall be discharged.

## **5.9 Illegality**

If, by virtue of the introduction of any new law or regulation in France, any change of law or other mandatory provision or any change in the interpretation thereof by any court or administrative authority, which takes effect after the Issue Date, it becomes unlawful for the Issuer to perform or comply with its obligations under the Notes, the Issuer shall have the right, having given notice to the Noteholders in accordance with Article 14, at the earliest 45 days and at the latest 30 days prior to such payment (which notice shall be irrevocable), redeem all and not some only of the Notes at the Early Redemption Amount together with all interest accrued up to the date fixed for redemption (excluded).

# **6. PAYMENTS AND TALONS**

## **6.1 Dematerialised Notes**

Any Payment of principal or interest in respect of Dematerialised Notes shall be made (a) in the case of Dematerialised Notes in bearer form or in administered registered form (*au nominatif administré*), by transfer to an account denominated in the Specified Currency held with the Account Holders for the benefit of the Noteholders, and (b) in the case of Dematerialised Notes in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*), by transfer to an account denominated in the Specified Currency, held with a Bank (as defined below) specified by the relevant Noteholder. The Issuer's payment obligations shall be discharged upon such payments being duly made to such Account Holders or such Bank.

## **6.2 Physical Notes**

### **(a) Method of payment**

Subject as provided below, any payment in a Specified Currency shall be made by credit or transfer to an account denominated in the Specified Currency or to which the Specified Currency may be credited or transferred held by the beneficiary or, at the option of the beneficiary, by cheque denominated in the Specified Currency drawn on a bank located in the principal financial centre of the country of the Specified Currency (which shall be a country within the Euro-zone).

(b) **Presentation and surrender of Physical Notes, Receipts and Coupons**

Any payment of principal in respect of Physical Notes, shall (subject as provided below) be made in the manner described in paragraph (a) above solely upon presentation and surrender (or, in the case of a partial payment of an outstanding amount, upon endorsement) of the relevant Notes and any payment of interest in respect of Physical Notes shall (subject as provided below) be made in the manner described above solely upon presentation and surrender (or, in the case of a partial payment of an outstanding amount, upon endorsement) of the relevant Coupons, in each case at the specified office of any Paying Agent located outside the United States of America (such term meaning for the purposes hereof the United States of America (including the States and District of Columbia, their territories, possessions and other places under its jurisdiction)).

Any instalment of principal in respect of Physical Notes, other than the last instalment, shall, where relevant, (subject as provided below) be made in the manner described in paragraph (a) above upon presentation and surrender (or, in the case of a partial payment of an outstanding amount, upon endorsement) of the related Receipt in accordance with the preceding paragraph. Payment of the last instalment shall be made in the manner described in paragraph (a) above solely upon presentation and surrender (or, in the case of a partial payment of an outstanding amount, upon endorsement) of the related Note, in accordance with the preceding paragraph. Each Receipt must be presented for payment of the relevant Instalment together with the related Physical Note. Any Receipt presented for payment without the related Physical Note shall render the Issuer's obligations null and void.

Unmatured Receipts relating to Physical Notes (whether or not attached thereto) shall become void and no payment shall be made in respect thereof on the date on which such Physical Notes mature.

Fixed Rate Notes represented by Physical Notes must be surrendered for payment together with all unmatured Coupons appertaining thereto (such expression including, for the purposes hereof, Coupons to be issued in exchange for matured Talons), failing which the amount of any missing unmatured Coupon (or, in the case of a partial payment, that proportion of the amount of such missing unmatured Coupon that the sum of principal so paid bears to the total principal due) shall be deducted from the amount due. Any amount of principal so deducted shall be paid in the manner described above against surrender of the missing Coupon before the 1<sup>st</sup> January of the fourth year following the due date for payment of such amount, and not under any circumstances thereafter.

Where a Fixed Rate Note represented by a Physical Note becomes due prior to its Maturity Date, unmatured Talons appertaining thereto become void and no further Coupons shall be delivered.

Where a Floating Rate Note represented by a Physical Note becomes due prior to its Maturity Date, unmatured Coupons and Talons (if any) appertaining thereto (whether or not attached) become void and no payment shall be made or, if relevant, no further Coupons shall be delivered in respect thereof.

If a Physical Note is redeemed on a date that is not an Interest Payment Date, the interest (if any) accrued on such Note since the previous Interest Payment Date (included) or, as the case may be, the Interest Period Commencement Date (included) shall be paid only against presentation and surrender (if relevant) of the related Physical Note.

**6.3 Payments subject to fiscal laws**

All payments are subject to any applicable fiscal or other laws, regulations and directives and any other laws or regulations applicable to the Issuer or its representatives, but without prejudice to the provisions of Article 7. No commission or expenses shall be charged to the Noteholders, Receiptholders or Couponholders in respect of such payments.

## 6.4 Appointment of Agents

The Fiscal Agent, the Paying Agents, the Calculation Agent and the Registration Agent initially appointed by the Issuer and their respective specified offices are listed at the end of this Offering Circular for the Programme. The Fiscal Agent, the Paying Agents and the Registration Agent act solely as agents, and the Calculation Agents solely as independent experts, of the Issuer and under no circumstances do any of them assume any obligation or relationship of agency for or with any Noteholder or Couponholder. The Issuer reserves the right at any time to vary or terminate the appointment of the Fiscal Agent, any Paying Agent, Calculation Agent or Registration Agent and to appoint any other Fiscal Agent, Paying Agent(s), Calculation Agent(s) or Registration Agent(s) or any additional Paying Agent(s), Calculation Agent(s) or Registration Agent(s), provided that the Issuer shall at all times maintain (a) a Fiscal Agent, (b) one or more Calculation Agents, where the Terms and Conditions so require, (c) a Paying Agent with specified offices in at least two major European cities (providing fiscal agency services in respect of the Notes in France so long as any Notes are admitted to trading on Euronext Paris and applicable market regulations so require), (d) in the case of Dematerialised Notes in pure registered form (*au nominatif pur*), a Registration Agent and (e) any other agent that may be required under the rules of any regulated market on which the Notes may be admitted to trading.

Notice of any such change or of any change of any specified office shall promptly be given to the Noteholders in accordance with Article 14.

## 6.5 Talons

On or after the Interest Payment Date for the final Coupon forming part of a Coupon sheet issued in respect of any Materialised Note, the Talon forming part of such Coupon sheet may be surrendered at the specified office of the Fiscal Agent in exchange for a further Coupon sheet (and if necessary another Talon for a further Coupon sheet) (but excluding any Coupons that may have become void pursuant to Article 9).

## 6.6 Business Days for payment

If any date for payment in respect of any Note, Receipt or Coupon is not a business day (as defined below), the Noteholder, Receiptholder or Couponholder shall not be entitled to any interest or payment until the next following business day, nor to any other sum in respect of such postponed payment. In this paragraph, "business day" means a day (other than a Saturday or Sunday) (a) (i) in the case of Dematerialised Notes, on which Euroclear France is operating, or (ii) in the case of Materialised Notes, on which banks and foreign exchange markets are open for business in the relevant place of presentation of the note for payment, and (b) on which banks and foreign exchange markets are open for business in the countries specified as "Financial Centres" in the applicable Pricing Supplement and (c) which is a T2 Business Day.

## 6.7 Bank

For the purposes of this Article 6, **Bank** means a bank established in a city in which banks have access to the T2.

## 7. TAXATION

### 7.1 Withholding

All payments of principal, interest or other amounts by or on behalf of the Issuer in respect of the Notes, Receipts or Coupons shall be made free and clear of, and without withholding or deduction for, any taxes or duties of whatever nature imposed, levied or collected by or on behalf of France or any

authority therein or thereof having power to levy tax, unless such withholding or deduction is required by law.

## 7.2 Additional amounts

If French law requires that payments of principal, interest or other proceeds in respect of any Note, Receipt or Coupon be subject to withholding or deduction with respect to any taxes or duties whatsoever, present or future, the Issuer will, to the fullest extent then permitted by law, pay such additional amounts as may be necessary in order that the holders of Notes, Receipts and Coupons receive the full amount that would have been payable in the absence of such withholding or deduction; except that no such additional amounts shall be payable with respect to any Note, Receipt or Coupon in the following cases:

- (a) **Other connection:** the holder of Notes, Receipts or Coupons, or any third party acting on his behalf, is liable to such taxes in France by reason of having some connection with France other than the mere holding of the Notes, Receipts or Coupons; or
- (b) **More than 30 days have passed since the Relevant Date:** in the case of Materialised Notes, more than 30 days have passed since the Relevant Date, except where the holder of Notes, Receipts or Coupons would have been entitled to an additional amount on presentation of the same for payment on the last day of such 30-day period.

References in these Terms to (i) "principal" shall be deemed to include any premium payable in respect of the Notes, Final Redemption Amounts, Instalment Amounts, Early Redemption Amounts, Optional Redemption Amounts and all other amounts in the nature of principal payable pursuant to Article 5 as completed by the Pricing Supplement, (ii) "interest" shall be deemed to include all Coupon Amounts and all other amounts payable pursuant to Article 4 as completed by the Pricing Supplement and (iii) "principal" and/or "interest" shall be deemed to include any additional amounts that may be payable under this Article.

## 8. EVENTS OF DEFAULT

If any of the following events occurs (each an **Event of Default**), (i) the Representative (as defined in Article 10) on its own initiative or upon request of any holder of Notes may, upon simple written notice addressed on behalf of the *Masse* (as defined in Article 10) to the Fiscal Agent with copy addressed to the Issuer, make the redemption immediately and automatically due and payable of all the Notes (and not a part only); or (ii) if there is no Representative, any holder of Notes may, on simple written notice addressed to the Fiscal Agent with copy addressed to the Issuer, make the redemption immediately and automatically due and payable of the Notes held by the author of the notice, immediately and automatically due and payable, at their Early Redemption Amount, with interest accrued to the date of repayment (excluded) (including, if applicable, any additional amounts), without the necessity for any prior formal demand:

- (a) if the Issuer defaults in any payment at its due date of any amount in principal or interest payment due under any Notes, Receipt or Coupon (including payment of any gross up provided by Article 7.2 "Taxation" above) unless it has been remedied to that default of payment within twenty (20) days following the due date of this payment;
- (b) if the Issuer fails to perform any other provision of this terms and conditions of the Notes if it has not been remedied within thirty (30) days following on the receipt by the Issuer of a written notice of this failure;
- (c) if the Issuer is not able to face its mandatory expenses as specified in Articles L.2321-1 *et seq.* of the CGCT or make a written statement recognising such inability;

- (d)
  - (i) is the Issuer do not redeem or pay, all or part of any amount payable for any existing or future financial debt at their expected or anticipated redemption or payment date and, as the case may be, after any grace period expressly specified by the contractual provisions of the indebtedness, but only if such financial debt is greater to euros fifty million (50,000,000) (or its equivalent in any other authorised currencies); or
  - (ii) if the Issuer do not pay, all or part of a (or several) guarantee(s) granted in respect of any financial indebtedness entered into by third parties, where such guarantee(s) fall(s) due and are duly called, but only if the amount of this or these guarantees is greater than euros fifty million (50,000,000) (or its equivalent in any other authorised currencies); or
- (e) if the legal status or regime of the Issuer is amended, including as a result of a legislative or regulation amending, as far as in each case, such modification reduces the rights of the Noteholders against the Issuer or makes more difficult or more expensive actions of the Noteholders against the Issuer.

## 9. PRESCRIPTION

All claims against the Issuer in relation to the Notes, Receipts and Coupons (except for Talons) shall lapse after four years from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the year following their respective due dates (pursuant to the Law no. 68-1250 of 31 December 1968).

## 10. REPRESENTATION OF NOTEHOLDERS

The Noteholders shall be automatically grouped, in respect of all Tranches of a single Series, for the defence of their common interests in a *masse* (the **Masse**). The Masse shall be governed by the provisions of the French *Code de Commerce*, except articles L. 228-71 and R. 228-69 of the *Code de commerce*, as supplemented by this Article 10.

### (a) Legal personality

The Masse will be a separate legal entity, acting in part through a representative (the **Representative**) and in part through collective decisions of the Noteholders (the **Collective Decisions**).

The Masse alone, to the exclusion of all individual Noteholders, shall exercise the common rights, actions and benefits which may accrue now or in the future under or with respect to the Notes.

### (b) Representative

The names and addresses of the incumbent Representative of the Masse and his alternate shall be set forth in the applicable Pricing Supplement. The Representative appointed for the first Tranche of a Series of Notes shall be the sole Representative of the Masse for all Tranches of such Series.

The Representative shall receive remuneration for the performance of his functions and duties, if so provided, on such date or dates as may be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. No additional remuneration shall be owed in relation to any successive Tranches of a Series of Notes.

In the event of death, dissolution, resignation or dismissal of a Representative, the alternate Representative shall replace him. In the event of death, dissolution, resignation or dismissal of

the alternate Representative, such alternate Representative may be replaced another alternate Representative appointed by the Noteholders' General Meeting.

All interested parties may at any time obtain the names and addresses of the initial Representative and his alternate at the principal office of the Issuer and the specified office of any of the Paying Agents.

(c) Powers of the Representative

The Representative shall (in the absence of any Collective Decision to the contrary), have the power to take any management action necessary for the defence of the common interests of the Noteholders.

All legal proceedings brought against or by the Noteholders must be brought by or against the Representative.

The Representative may not interfere in the management of the Issuer's affairs.

(d) Collective Decisions

Collective Decisions are adopted at General Meetings (each a **General Meeting**) or by decision resulting from a written consultation (the **Written Decision**).

In accordance with article R.228-71 of the French *Code de Commerce*, each Noteholder shall claim the right to participate in the Collective Decisions by registering his Notes in his name, in the registered note accounts held by the Issuer, either in bearer note accounts held by an intermediary (if applicable) on the second (2nd) business day preceding the date of the Collective Decision at midnight, Paris time.

Collective Decisions shall be published in accordance with the provisions of Article 14.

The Issuer must keep a record of the Collective Decisions and must make it available, on request, to any subsequent Noteholder of Notes of that Series.

(e) General Meeting

Noteholders' General Meetings may be held at any time, on convocation either by the Issuer or the Representative. One or more Noteholders, holding together at least one-thirtieth of the nominal amount of the Notes outstanding may request the Issuer or the Representative to convene a General Meeting. If such General Meeting has not been convened within two (2) months from such demand, such Noteholders may instruct one of themselves to petition the competent courts of Paris to appoint an agent to convene the meeting.

Notice of the date, hour, place and agenda of the General Meeting shall be published as provided in Article 14 at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the date of the General Meeting on first convening and no less than five calendar days prior to the date of the General Meeting on second convening.

Each Noteholder has the right to participate in General Meetings in person, by proxy, by postal ballot by video conference or by any other means of telecommunication allowing participating Noteholders to be identified. Each Note carries one vote or, in the case of Notes issued with several Specified Denominations, one vote in respect of each multiple of the smallest Specified Denomination comprised in the principal amount of the Specified Denomination of such Note.

(f) Quorum and majority

General Meetings may only deliberate validly on first convocation if the Noteholders present or represented hold at least one fifth of the nominal amount of Notes then outstanding. On second convening no quorum is required. Decisions at General Meetings shall be valid if taken by a simple majority of the votes cast by the Noteholders present or represented at such meeting.

Resolutions adopted by General Meetings shall be published in accordance with the provisions of Article 14.

(g) Written Decisions and Electronic Consent

On the initiative of the Issuer or the Representative, collective decisions may also be taken by Written Decision.

Such Written Decision must be signed by or on behalf of all the Noteholders holding at least ninety (90) per cent of the nominal amount of Notes in issue without having to comply with the formalities and deadlines stipulated in Article 10(e). Any Written Decision shall, in any event, have the same effect as a resolution passed at a Noteholders' General Meeting. Such a decision may be recorded in a single document or in several documents, signed by or on behalf of one or more Noteholders and shall be published in accordance with Article 14.

Pursuant to article L.228-46-1 of the *Code de commerce*, approval of a Written Decision may be given by any means of electronic communication enabling the Noteholders to be identified (**Electronic Consent**).

(h) Information for Noteholders

Each Noteholder or its representative shall have the right, throughout the fifteen (15)-calendar day period preceding the holding of each General Meeting, to consult or make copies of the text of the resolutions to be proposed and of the reports to be presented at the General Meeting. Such documents will be available for inspection at the principal office of the Issuer, at the specified offices of the Paying Agents and at any other place specified in the notice of such meeting.

(i) Expenses

The Issuer shall pay, upon presentation of duly documented evidence, all expenses incurred in connection with the conduct of the affairs of the *Masse*, including all expenses relating to notices and the holding of Collective Decisions and, more generally, all administrative expenses adopted by Collective Decisions, provided however that no expenses may be imputed against any interest payable on the Notes.

(j) Single Masse

The holders of Notes of the same Series (including Noteholders of any other Tranche consolidated in accordance with Article 13) shall be grouped together for the defence of their common interests into a single Masse. The Representative appointed for the first Tranche of a Series of Notes shall be the Representative of the single Masse of the Series.

(k) Single Noteholder

For as long as the Notes are held by a single Noteholder, and in the absence of the appointment of a Representative, the relevant Noteholder will exercise all of the powers devolved to the *Masse* under the provisions of the *Code de Commerce*, as supplemented by this Article. The Issuer shall hold (or cause any authorised agent to hold) a record of the decisions adopted by the single Noteholder and shall make it available, on request, to any other Holder of Notes of the same Series. A representative shall be appointed by the Issuer as soon as the Notes of a Series are held by more than one Noteholder (except where a Representative has already been appointed in the Pricing Supplement of the relevant issue of Notes).

For the avoidance of doubt in this Article 10, the term "outstanding" shall not include the Notes purchased by the Issuer pursuant to Article 5.7 which are held and not cancelled.

## **11. AMENDMENTS**

The parties to the Fiscal Agency Agreement may, without the consent of the Noteholders, Receiptholders or Couponholders, amend or waive any provisions thereof with a view to remedying any ambiguity or rectifying, correcting or completing any defective provision of the Fiscal Agency Agreement, or in any other manner that the parties to the Fiscal Agency Agreement may consider necessary or desirable but only to the extent that, in the reasonable opinion of the parties, the interests of the Noteholders, Receiptholders or Couponholders are not prejudiced.

## **12. REPLACEMENT OF PHYSICAL NOTES, COUPONS, RECEIPTS AND TALONS**

In the case of Materialised Notes, any Physical Note, Receipt, Coupon or Talon that has been lost, stolen, defaced or destroyed in whole or in part, may be replaced, in compliance with applicable laws and stock market rules and regulations at the offices of the Fiscal Agent or any other Paying Agent, if any, appointed by the Issuer for such purpose and whose appointment shall be notified to the Noteholders. Such replacement shall be made against payment by the claimant of any fees and expenses incurred in connection therewith and subject to such terms as to proof, security or indemnity (which may provide, inter alia, that in the event that the Physical Note, Receipt, Coupon or Talon allegedly lost, stolen or destroyed is subsequently presented for payment or, as the case may be, for exchange for further Coupons, the Issuer shall be paid, at its request, the amount payable by the Issuer in respect of such Physical Notes, Coupons or further Coupons). Partially destroyed or defaced Materialised Notes, Receipts, Coupons or Talons must be surrendered before replacements will be issued.

## **13. CONSOLIDATED ISSUES**

The Issuer shall be entitled, without the consent of the holders of any Notes, Receipts or Coupons, to create and issue further notes to be consolidated with the Notes to form a single Series, provided that such Notes and the further notes confer on their holders rights that are identical in all respects (or identical in all respects other than the Issue Date, issue price and the first interest payment) and that the terms of such Notes provide for consolidation and references to "Notes" in these Terms shall be interpreted accordingly.

## **14. NOTICES**

- 14.1 Notices addressed by the Issuer to the holders of Dematerialised Notes in registered form shall be valid either (a) if they are posted to their respective addresses, in which case they shall be deemed to have been delivered on the fourth Business Day after posting or (b) at the option of the Issuer, if they are published on the website of any relevant regulatory authority, in one of the leading economic and financial daily newspapers with general circulation in Europe. So long as the Notes are admitted to



trading on any regulated market and the applicable rules of such market so require, notices shall not be deemed to be valid unless published in an economic and financial daily newspaper with general circulation in the city(ies) in which the Notes are admitted to trading, which in the case of Euronext Paris is expected to be *Les Echos* and in any other manner required, as the case may be, under the applicable rules of such market.

- 14.2 Notices addressed to Noteholders of Materialised Notes and Dematerialised Notes in bearer form shall be valid if published in a leading economic and financial daily newspaper with general circulation in Europe and, so long as the Notes are admitted to trading on any regulated market and the applicable rules of such market so require, notices shall also be published in an economic and financial daily newspaper with general circulation in the city(ies) in which the Notes are admitted to trading, which in the case of Euronext Paris is expected to be *Les Echos* and in any other manner required, as the case may be, under the applicable rules of such market.
- 14.3 If any such publication is not practicable, the notice shall be validly given if published in a leading economic and financial newspaper with general circulation in Europe, provided however that, so long as the Notes are admitted to trading on any regulated market, notices must be published in any other manner required, as the case may be, under the applicable rules of such regulated market. Noteholders shall be deemed to have had notice of the contents of any notice on the date of publication, or if the notice was published more than once or on different dates, on the date of the first publication as described above. Couponholders shall be deemed, in all circumstances, to have had notice of the contents of any notice addressed to Noteholders of Materialised Notes in accordance with this Article.
- 14.4 Notices addressed to holders of Dematerialised Notes (whether in registered or bearer form) in accordance with these Terms may be delivered to Euroclear France, Euroclear, Clearstream or any other clearing system through which the Notes are then cleared, instead of posting or publishing the notice as provided in Articles 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3 above, provided however that so long as the Notes are admitted to trading on any regulated market and the applicable rules of such market so require, notices shall also be published in an economic and financial daily newspaper with general circulation in the city(ies) in which the Notes are admitted to trading, which in the case of Euronext Paris is expected to be *Les Echos* and in any other manner required, as the case may be, under the applicable rules of such market.
- 14.5 Notices relating to Collective Decisions, in accordance with Article 10 and in accordance with articles R.228-79 and R.236-14 of the *Code de commerce*, shall be delivered to Euroclear France, Euroclear, Clearstream and to any other clearing system through which Notes are cleared from time to time. For the avoidance of doubt Articles 14.1, 14.2, 14.3 and 14.4 do not apply to such notices.

## **15. GOVERNING LAW, LANGUAGE AND JURISDICTION**

### **15.1 Governing Law**

The Notes, Receipts, Coupons and Talons are governed by and shall be interpreted in accordance with French law.

### **15.2 Language**

This Offering Circular has been drafted in the French language. A free translation in English may be available, however only the French version may be relied upon as the authentic and binding version.

### **15.3 Jurisdiction**

Any dispute in relation to the Notes, Receipts, Coupons or Talons shall be submitted to the courts within the jurisdiction of the Paris Court of Appeal (subject to mandatory provisions related to territorial jurisdiction of French courts). No private law enforcement measures may be instigated and no seizure or attachment proceedings may be brought against the assets or property of the Issuer as a legal entity governed by public law.

## TEMPORARY GLOBAL CERTIFICATES IN RESPECT OF MATERIALISED NOTES

### 1. TEMPORARY GLOBAL CERTIFICATES

A Temporary Global Certificate in respect of Materialised Notes, without interest coupons, will initially be issued (a **Temporary Global Certificate**) for each Tranche of Materialised Notes, and shall be deposited at the latest by the issue date of such Tranche with a common depository (the **Common Depository**) for Euroclear Bank SA/NV, as operator of the Euroclear system (**Euroclear**) and Clearstream Banking SA (**Clearstream**). Following deposit of such Temporary Global Certificate with a Common Depository, Euroclear or Clearstream shall credit each subscriber with an amount in principal of Notes equal to the nominal amount so subscribed and paid for.

The Common Depository may also credit the accounts of subscribers of a nominal amount of Notes (if so specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement) in other clearing systems through accounts held directly or indirectly by such other clearing systems with Euroclear and Clearstream. Conversely, a nominal amount of Notes initially deposited with any other clearing system may, in the same manner, be credited to the accounts of subscribers held with Euroclear, Clearstream or other clearing systems.

### 2. EXCHANGE

Each Temporary Global Certificate in respect of Materialised Notes shall be exchangeable, free of charge to the bearer, at the earliest on the Exchange Date (as defined below):

- (a) if the applicable Pricing Supplement specify that the Temporary Global Certificate is issued in compliance with the C Rules or in a transaction to which the TEFRA rules do not apply, in whole but not in part, for Physical Notes; and
- (b) in all other cases, in whole but not in part, after certification, to the extent required under section § 1.163-5(c)(2)(i)(D)(4)(ii) of the US Treasury regulations, that the Notes are not held by US persons, for Physical Notes.

### 3. DELIVERY OF PHYSICAL NOTES

On or after the Exchange Date, the holder of a Temporary Global Certificate may surrender such Temporary Global Certificate to or to the order of the Fiscal Agent. The Issuer shall, in exchange for any Temporary Global Certificate, deliver or procure the delivery of an equal aggregate nominal amount of duly signed and authenticated Physical Notes. For the purposes of this Offering Circular, **Physical Notes** means, in respect of a Temporary Global Certificate, the Physical Notes for which the Temporary Global Certificate may be exchanged (having, if appropriate, attached to them all Coupons and Receipts in respect of interest or Instalment Amounts that have not already been paid on the Temporary Global Certificate and a Talon). Physical Notes will be security printed in accordance with any applicable legal and stock exchange requirements.

**Exchange Date** means, in relation to a Temporary Global Certificate, the day falling no earlier than 40 calendar days after its issue date, provided however that, in the case of a further issue of Materialised Notes, to be consolidated with such previously mentioned Materialised Notes, issued prior to such day in accordance with Article 13, the Exchange Date may, at the option of the Issuer, be postponed until a date falling at least 40 calendar days after the issue date of such further Materialised Notes.

In the case of Materialised Notes with a minimum maturity of more than 365 calendar days (to which the TEFRA C Rules do not apply), the Temporary Global Certificate must include the following legend:

**ANY UNITED STATES PERSON (AS DEFINED IN THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986) WHO HOLDS THIS NOTE WILL BE SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS UNDER UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS, INCLUDING THOSE PROVIDED UNDER SECTIONS 165(J) AND 1287(A) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986, AS AMENDED.**

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUER

### 1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Issuer is the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône (the **Département** or the **Bouches-du-Rhône**), a local authority. Its head office address is Hôtel du Département, 52, avenue de Saint-Just, 13256 Marseille Cedex 20, France.

The *Département* has a website that sets out details of it as an institution, its plans and policies as well as providing access (direct or via a link) to various tools for information and discussion (“[www.departement13.fr](http://www.departement13.fr)”).



© Provence Tourism.

The Département des Bouches-du-Rhône lies in the heart of Provence; it is part of the Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur (**PACA or the Région**). It borders the *départements* Vaucluse to the north, Var to the east, the région Occitanie Pyrénées Méditerranée to the west and, to the south, a wide coastline opens up to the Mediterranean Sea. The *département*’s landmass is made up of 49% natural spaces (forests and semi-natural environments, humid zones, open water), 35% farm land and 16% artificial areas (urban zones, industrial zones..)<sup>1</sup>.

Two huge geological formations divide the *Département*: limestone to the East, alluvial plain to the West.

The limestone section, between the *Etang de Berre* and the Var border, reveals major geological upthrust (“*pyrénéo-provençal upthrust*”) and jutting out of the landscape are veritable mountains, if not by their absolute height, but rather their relative height, running east-west.

From the *Etang de Berre* to the Rhône, the limestone ranges continue through the Alpilles, to the north, but elsewhere the wide plains dominate: muddy and still partly marshy in the Rhône delta (Camargue) or created by the outflow of stone and pebble debris laid down by the Durance (Crau).

<sup>1</sup> Source: European Union, Corine Land Cover



@Baage – Calanques

@ Batirama – Fos

@Provence guide - Market

It is an area of stark contrast, in which cohabit, to the west and north, mainly rural areas with an industrial and urban landscape in the south and east. This area of the *Département* is notably where its two largest towns are located (Marseille with 873,076 inhabitants and Aix-en-Provence with 147,478 inhabitants<sup>2</sup>), with the international Marseille-Provence airport, the arrival in the centre of Marseille of the Mediterranean TGV line which places the *Département* 3 hours from Paris, an international dimension port and the home of a large number of businesses in the secondary and tertiary sectors.

Marseille is the *Département*'s principal town and the location of the *région* PACA's and the *Bouches-du-Rhône*'s administrative head offices (*Préfecture*). The subsidiary offices (*sub-préfectures*) of the *Département* are located in the towns of Aix-en-Provence (second most populous town of the *Département*), Arles (50,415 inhabitants) and Istres (44,577 inhabitants)<sup>3</sup>.

**Population:** With 2,056,943 inhabitants, the *Département des Bouches-du-Rhône* is the third largest *département* in France in terms of population, behind Paris and Nord<sup>4</sup>.

In addition to the towns mentioned above, the *Département* has 10 other towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants: Martigues (48 568), Aubagne (47 324), Salon-de-Provence (44 731), La Ciotat (36 987), Vitrolles (35 532), Marignane (33 003), Miramas (26 405), Les Pennes-Mirabeau (22 161), Allauch (21 490), Gardanne (21 174)<sup>5</sup>.

**Surface area:** 5,087 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Cantons:** 29.

**Number of communes:** 119.

**Principal town of the Département:** Marseille.

**Prefecture:** Marseille.

**Sub-prefectures:** Aix-en-Provence, Arles, Istres.

#### **Number of amenities available to the local population:**

- 191 public and private schools under contract at the start of the 2023 school year (source: Aix-Marseille academy). Of note is the *Cité Scolaire Internationale* project, an institution that brings together in one place a primary school, a middle school and a high school and with a

<sup>2</sup> Source INSEE. Population as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Population figures are municipal population, as defined by INSEE.

<sup>3</sup> Source: INSEE. Population as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Population figures are municipal population, as defined by INSEE.

<sup>4</sup> Source: INSEE. Population as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Population figures are municipal population, as defined by INSEE.

<sup>5</sup> Source: INSEE. Population as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Population figures are municipal population, as defined by INSEE.

focus on foreign language learning. Located on the perimeter of d'Euroméditerranée<sup>6</sup> in Marseille, this future institution will open by the beginning of the school year in 2024;

- At 31/12/2021, 270 facilities are intended for the elderly (EHPAD, non-EHPAD, independent residences, long-term care establishments and day centres) and 171 for adults with disabilities (foster family homes, hostels, ESAT, SSIAD)<sup>7</sup>;
- the *Département* has 134 healthcare establishments (public and private)<sup>8</sup>, including two leading hospitals:
  - the *Assistance Publique des Hôpitaux de Marseille* (4 hospitals and 3400 beds) is the no. 3 French medical research centre. It is also the no. 1 employer in the region, with more than 12,000 employees and almost 2000 doctors<sup>9</sup>;
  - the *Institut Paoli Calmettes* is a centre of excellence in oncology with 2 054 employees, including 431 practitioners and 277 full hospitalisation beds<sup>10</sup>.

### **Economy<sup>11</sup>:**

- The *Bouches-du-Rhône* has 241,669 establishments (commercial activities excluding agriculture) at 31/12/2021.
- In the first quarter of 2024, the number of salaried employees in the *Bouches-du-Rhône* was 886,400 compared with 2,020,400 in the PACA; These were mainly concentrated in the tertiary sector with 85% (52% for the commercial tertiary sector and 33% for the non-commercial tertiary sector). Industry accounts for around 8.4% of salaried jobs and construction, 6%<sup>12</sup>;
- the *Département* accounts for the largest number of business start-ups created in the Région : 41,580 in March 2024 (over one year) or around 40% of the business start-ups in the Région. In the *Bouches-du-Rhône*, this recurring strength can be explained in particular by the presence of a large number of business support (incubator type) structures. The economic fabric is varied, comprising very small enterprises as well as major contractors (Airbus Helicopters, CMA CGM, ST Microelectronics, Arcelor...). The presence of these major groups (700) ensures a certain level of stability in times of crisis and supports the local economy in normal times;
- finally, the *Bouches-du-Rhône* accounts for 43.3% of total bank financing in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur at 31 March 2024<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Euroméditerranée is the largest urban renewal project for economic, social and cultural planning and development in Southern Europe. It is part of a 480-hectare area in the heart of the Marseilles metropolis, between the commercial port, the Vieux-Port and the TGV station. This project is classified as project of national interest (*Opération d'Intérêt National*).

<sup>7</sup> Source : STATISS 2022 (data available at 03/06/2024)

<sup>8</sup> Source : STATISS 2022 - data available at 03/06/2024

<sup>9</sup> Source : Fédération hospitalière de France

<sup>10</sup> Source : IPC

<sup>11</sup> Source: INSEE, 27/06/2024

<sup>12</sup> Source: INSEE, 02/07/2024.

<sup>13</sup> Source: Banque de France, publication 24/06/2024.

## 2. LEGAL AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE DEPARTEMENT

### 2.1 A local authority the result of decentralisation but which has developed considerably since

Like the vast majority of French *départements*, the history of the *Département des Bouches-du-Rhône* forms part of a process of decentralisation under which areas, previously governed by the central powers of the State, gradually became self-governed by locally elected authorities.

The existence of *départements* was first recognised in 1790 (territorial division of France into 83 entities) out of a desire to redemarcate the French “kingdom”. Against this background, the *départements* became the representation of the State at local level around the country.

The *Préfet*, the State’s representative, guaranteed implementation of its policies locally (the “sole and indivisible” Republic). At that time, the powers of *départements* and communes were very limited. The *préfet* held the executive power in the *Département*. Up until 1982, he exercised very tight control, supervision (“*tutelle*”), over the acts of local authorities.

In the 1980s, the great decentralisation laws (introduced by the minister, who is originally from the *Département* and a former Mayor of the City of Marseille, Mr Gaston Defferre) sparked a new boom for *départements* by introducing two major changes in their administration. Thus, the law of 2nd March 1982, seen as Act I of the decentralisation process, brought two decisive changes to *départements*:

- (a) abolition of *a priori* administrative supervision by the *Préfet*, replaced by a system of *a posteriori* control of legality, the *Préfet* remaining the representative of the State in the *Département*;
- (b) transfer of the executive power in the *Département* from the *Préfet* to the President of the general Council, elected by a council which itself is elected by direct suffrage of the *Département*’s inhabitants.

Today, the *Département*’s status is governed by the provisions of the French Constitution (article 72 of the Constitution of 4 October 1958 under the principle of free local authority administration), and laws and regulations codified in the local authorities general Code (CGCT).

Under the so-called “Defferre” law, the laws of 7 January and 22 July 1983, powers were shared between the State and local authorities (communes, *Départements* and *régions*) and a transfer of funding began to enable such powers to be exercised (global operating, equipment, and decentralisation endowments) including social welfare action with mandatory welfare benefits (for the elderly or disabled, persons living precariously ...) or the construction and maintenance of schools in the *Département*.

Act II of the decentralisation process: since 2003, the government has adopted several laws which form “Act II” of the decentralisation process.

First, the constitutional amendment of 28 March 2003 on structural decentralisation of the French Republic extends local authorities’ responsibilities.

The law relating to local freedoms and responsibilities of 13<sup>th</sup> August 2004 represents the last legislative stage of this new “Act” of decentralisation policy. This law lists all of the new powers transferred by the State to local authorities and in particular to *Départements* (in 2005: income support (RMI, henceforth known as the active solidarity income “**RSA**”), transfer of school technical staff or maintenance of sections of the national road network; in 2007: 358 km of national main roads are reclassified as “departmental” roads in the *Bouches-du-Rhône* and responsibility for upkeep of the network and management of its personnel are also transferred to it). At the same time, it lays down the



financial compensation principles for the various transfers of powers and organises the transfer of personnel from the State to local authorities, the guarantees to be offered to transferred civil servants and also the inter-communal organisational and operational arrangements. Transfers of powers, transfer of personnel and allocation of funding take place gradually as from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005.

Following the departmental elections on 22 and 29 March 2015, the articles of law no. 2013-403 of 17 May 2013<sup>14</sup> relating to *Départements* entered into force. Henceforth, general Councils have become departmental Councils. In parallel, the renewal of the Council, which used to relate to half the Council every three years, will from now on relate to the whole Council every six years. Binominal voting to ensure gender parity has been introduced. As a result, following the 2015 elections, departmental Councils comprise 50% women for the first time. In order to achieve this, the number of cantons in which departmental councillors are elected equals, for each *Département*, half the number of cantons that existed on 1 January 2013, rounded up to the next odd whole number, if the number is not a whole odd number.

Legislative reforms concerning administrative streamlining and the creation of major metropolises led to the adoption of the law for the modernisation of local authority public action and affirmation of metropolises (the MAPTAM law) and of the law on redefining regional boundaries and changing the electoral calendar approved respectively in January 2014 and January 2015. Law no. 2015-991 of 7 August 2015 on the new territorial structure of the Republic (the NOTRe law) provides for a new local authority structural reorganisation.

The aim of the MAPTAM law is to clarify local authority powers by establishing a local authority public action summit (CTAP). In this context, this law creates around 10 metropolises including that of Aix-Marseille-Provence which includes part of the territory of the *Département Bouches-du-Rhône*.

The law on redefining regional boundaries and changing the electoral calendar does not directly affect the *Département des Bouches-du-Rhône*, but does include the provisions relating to the replacement of departmental councillors.

The NOTRe law aims to reallocate powers between the various local authority levels. In this context, *départements* lose the general powers clause and have to shift their focus to local and human social welfare powers. As such, they retain the power to manage secondary schools, roads and social work. Moreover, should they wish to, *départements* can choose to retain control over sea and waterway ports, while school transport, which falls under the remit of the *régions*, may be delegated to the *départements*. Tourism will continue to be the shared responsibility of the local authorities, as will culture, sport and the promotion of regional languages.

Law 2017-257 of 28 February 2017 on the status of Paris and its urban development specifies in article 79: "*The Government shall submit to the Parliament, before 1 September 2017, a report concerning the potential merger of the departmental council of Bouches-du-Rhône with the metropolis of Aix-Marseille-Provence. This report aims to study the consequences of the institutional merger between these two entities and its feasibility before the deadline of the next local government elections.*"

The publication of this report did not lead to any concrete measures or announcements, and no draft legislation has appeared since. It is unlikely that this will be addressed in the near future.

The election of the departmental Council President, Martine VASSAL, as head of the *Métropole* since 20 September 2018 and her re-election as President of the *Métropole* on 9 July 2020, is on the other hand a fundamental factor for implementing concrete partnerships, rolling-out throughout the region

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<sup>14</sup> Law no. 2013-403 of 17 May 2013 relating to the election of departmental councillors, municipal councillors and community councillors, and amending the electoral calendar.

the common objectives of the two authorities in terms of sustainable development, mobility and also eradicating sub-standard housing.

The so-called “3DS” law n°2022-217 dated 21 February 2022 on differentiation, decentralisation, deconcentration and introducing various measures to simplify public action, does not constitute a major upheaval but nevertheless certain points concerning départements deserve to be highlighted.

It offers the possibility of transferring national roads (including motorways) and a trial renationalisation of RSA as well as automatic welfare benefits. It also confers upon the President of the *conseil départemental* powers to coordinate inclusive housing and provides for children's institution directors to be transferred to the départements.

The Département did not wish to commit to the renationalisation of RSA, preferring instead to pursue integration policies based on conditional allocation.

On 30 May 2024, Mr Eric WOERTH delivered to the President of the Republic a report on decentralisation containing 51 proposals aimed at relaunching, clarifying and deepening analysis on this matter. These proposals posed multiple challenges for the départements (complete overhaul of powers and responsibilities, départements being enshrined as actors of both solidarity and the networks; new framework for institutional relations with the State and other local authorities; reform of modes and sources of financing) however the current state of political and legislative affairs has brought a sudden halt to the process.

## 2.2 Specific institutional organisational and operational structure

### (a) The governing assembly: the departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône*

The Governing Assembly meets, on the initiative of its President, at least once per quarter (Article L. 3121-9 of the CGCT), to vote on the most important decisions relating to the operation of the local authority.

It has 58 members elected by direct universal suffrage for a term of 6 years.

The President of the departmental Council is elected by absolute majority by the departmental councillors at the first meeting following the renewal of the departmental Council which must be represented by at least two thirds of its members.

As such, Mrs Martine Vassal was re-elected as President of the departmental Council following the meeting of the departmental Council on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.



Source: [www.CD13.fr/le-13/linstitution/lassemblee-et-les-elus](http://www.CD13.fr/le-13/linstitution/lassemblee-et-les-elus)

### **The standing Committee**

Under the regulations (articles L. 3122-4 and 5 of the CGCT), the standing committee of the departmental Council is composed of:

- the President of the departmental Council, automatic member,
- vice-presidents and one or more other members in such number as the governing Assembly may determine.

The standing Committee deliberates on all matters delegated to it by the departmental Council.

The standing Committee of the departmental Council comprises 58 departmental councillors including the President of the departmental Council (1 President, 15 vice-presidents and 42 members) and deliberates on more than 2,000 reports each year.

It sits, as often as required, when convened by the President of the departmental Council (approximately every two months in the case of the *Département*).

Unlike departmental Council meetings, standing Committee meetings are not held in public.

The standing Committee of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* departmental Council is split into four committees which prepare decisions for submission to a vote. These are organised around the following four major sectors: social needs and requirements, appeal and outreach, general administration and protection of local areas. The general administration committee deals with all matters concerning the internal operations of the *Département*. The other three committees reflect the *Département's* priorities.

#### **(b) The executive power: the President of the departmental Council and vice-presidents**

Head of the executive authority, the President is also head of local authority services personnel. He is tasked with leading the Assembly's work, preparing decisions and overseeing their implementation.

He delegates some of his powers to vice-presidents and delegates.

### **Vice-Presidents: 15**

1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President	Danielle MILON, Responsible for Tourism
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President	Gérard GAZAY, Employment and Incentives Delegate
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice-President	Valérie GUARINO, Responsible for Disabled persons and MDPH
4 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Lucien LIMOUSIN, Responsible for Agriculture and Localities outside Métropole Aix-Marseille-Provence
5 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Marie-Pierre CALLET, Responsible for Roads
6 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Eric LE DISSES, Responsible for the Marseille-Provence airport
7 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Sabine BERNASCONI, Responsible for Professional Integration
8 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Denis ROSSI, Delegate for Charitable Associations and Humanitarian Interventions, for the Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of the Poverty Plan

9 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Véronique MIQUELLY, Responsible for Human Resources and General Administration
10 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Didier REAULT, Responsible for Agenda 2030, Nature-based solutions and Major risks
11 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Laure-Agnès CARADEC, Responsible for Local planning and development, Structural amenities and Transport financing
12 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Yves MORAINÉ, General Rapporteur for the Budget and Delegate for Military Veteran Affairs
13 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Nicole JOULIA, Responsible for Culture
14 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Thierry SANTELLI, Responsible for Sport for all, Sport for the disabled, Health sport and Promoting female sport
15 <sup>th</sup> Vice-President	Corinne CHABAUD, President of CaO – Public procurement and public service delegations

**Delegates** (in addition to the Vice-Presidents): **28**

<b>Martial ALVAREZ</b>	Delegate for Public Policy of the departmental solidarity centres (MDS)
<b>Agnès AMIEL</b>	Delegate for mother and infant protection, and for families and children
<b>Martine AMSELEM</b>	Delegate for road safety
<b>Laurence ANGELETTI</b>	Delegate for the well-being and dietary health of middle school students
<b>Julie ARIAS</b>	Delegate for social centres and public service quality
<b>Cyrille BLINT</b>	Delegate for secularism and promotion of Republican values
<b>Béatrice BONFILLON CHIAVASSA</b>	Delegate for schools
<b>Frédéric COLLART</b>	Delegate for the promotion of the Marseille region, the Departmental Laboratory for Analysis and the management of health crises, ports and the professional fishing and shellfish sector
<b>Lionel DE CALA</b>	Delegate for Not-for-Profit organisations
<b>Alison DEVAUX</b>	Delegate for youth
<b>Sylvain DI GIOVANNI</b>	Health and Higher Education and Research Leader
<b>Judith DOSSEMONT</b>	Delegate for housing policy and housing solidarity fund (FSL)

<b>Hélène GENTE-CEAGLIO</b>	Delegate for the battle against discrimination and violence against women and children
<b>Jacky GERARD</b>	Delegate for forests and estates of the <i>Département</i>
<b>Patrick GHIGONETTO</b>	Delegate for heritage, cultural property and heritage
<b>Vincent GOYET</b>	Delegate for international relations
<b>Mandy GRAILLON</b>	Delegate for security, prevention of delinquency and radicalisation, the requirement for trust and integrity, Provençale language and culture
<b>Hervé GRANIER</b>	Delegate for viticulture
<b>Yannick GUERIN</b>	Delegate for citizenship and the Provence Council
<b>Richard MALLIE</b>	Delegate for protection of forest massifs
<b>Arnaud MERCIER</b>	Delegate for management control, information systems and digital usage
<b>Jean-Marc PERRIN</b>	Delegate for the Elderly and promoting palaeontology and archaeology in Provence
<b>Henri PONS</b>	Delegate for soft mobility
<b>Nora PREZIOSI</b>	Responsible for Urban Policy and the new national urban renewal programme
<b>Marine PUSTORINO</b>	Delegate for major events, high level sport, E-sport, the Olympic and Paralympic Games and their heritage
<b>Anne RUDISUHLI</b>	Delegate for European affairs
<b>Amapola VENTRON</b>	Delegate for ecological transition and development of commercial forestry
<b>Yves VIDAL</b>	Delegate for hunting and fishing

Finally, the President of the departmental Council has direct powers, which he exercises by issuing decisions (*arrêtés*), and powers delegated to him by the departmental Council, such as:

- direct powers: originator of Departmental spending, personnel management (individual and Departmental administration), spokesperson of the State in the *Département* (in particular, with the *Préfet*, in social welfare action matters),
- delegated powers: decisions concerning public procurement, financial matters (contracting and managing borrowings and liquidity facilities within the maximum limits authorised by the departmental Council), right of first refusal in connection with asset disposals, power to bring legal proceedings in the name of the *Département*, decisions relating to the housing solidarity fund (financial aid, loans, debt waivers...).

(c) **Powers of the *Département***

Article 72 of the Constitution of 4<sup>th</sup> October 1958 recognizes the *Département* as the regional local authority of the French Republic. As such, its role is to take decisions in all the areas of authority that have been devolved to it.

Furthermore, article L. 3211-1 of the CGCT provides that “*Through its deliberations, the departmental council governs the affairs of the department in the areas that the law attributes to it.*”

*It has authority to implement any aid or action related to the prevention or management of fragile situations, social development, childcare and autonomy of individuals. It has also authority to facilitate the access to rights and public services of which it is responsible.*

*It has the power to promote solidarity, territorial cohesion and access to local care across the department, respecting the integrity, autonomy and powers of the regions and communes.*

*It contributes to health security policy as required under article L. 201-10-1 of the rural and maritime fishing code.*

*The president of the departmental Council has power to coordinate the development of inclusive housing as defined in article L. 281-1 of the social action and families code, in particular by presiding the conference specified in article L. 233-3-1 of the same code, and adapting housing to the ageing population.”*

Moreover, article L. 1111-4, fourth sub-paragraph of the CGCT establishes the principle that “*communes, departments and regions give priority to financing projects within the areas of authority devolved upon them by law*”.

Accordingly, improving the quality of life of *Bouches-du-Rhône* inhabitants, reducing injustice and inequality between generations and localities, promoting the development and outreach of the *Département*, all fall within the departmental Council’s remit.

To achieve this, and in strict compliance with the law, it has extended the attributions bestowed by law with voluntary departmental action promoting the return to work, the development and reinvigoration of the local area and access to services, with a constant desire to protect the environment and its resources.

The departmental Council also has an office in Brussels, whose aim is to boost the hunt for European partnerships and funding.

**Solidarity**

The *Département* is the local authority level most specifically responsible for social welfare. In this context, the law has conferred responsibilities on *Départements* in the areas of:

- children: mother and infant protection, child protection (foster placements, educational activities, unaccompanied minors), youth centres;
- the disabled: accommodation policy and social integration, disability living allowance (law of 11 February 2005), Departmental Centre for the Disabled;
- the elderly: establishment and management of retirement homes, policy for caring for the elderly at home or in care homes (individual independence allowance);

- social insertion: administering *revenu de solidarité active* (RSA) and integration initiatives; and
- social work: support to families and individuals in difficulty (emergency rescue, access to water and energy outside urban areas).

As part of, and in addition to, its responsibilities, the departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* has decided to implement a public health programme through major new facilities (buildings or equipment). It has decided to focus on access to jobs for those receiving RSA (it has opted to render RSA conditional on an activity) and to leverage the impact of its mandatory powers by supporting cultural, sports and leisure initiatives for people returning to work, people with disabilities (in particular the Handiprovence plan), for the elderly and young people. It strengthens links and presence in the territory through the network of Maisons du Bel-âge and provides support to families with the "Maison des aidants" which offers advice and support. It also actively promotes the right to housing and strives to eradicate sub-standard housing and has instigated centre against discrimination (including bullying in schools) and finances a "Women's Centre", an innovative organisation, modelled on the existing one in Seine-Saint-Denis, which addresses problems of violence as well as undertaking preventive and information initiatives. It looks after unaccompanied minors, in particular through special welcome centres. Finally, it has signed the poverty Plan (now "solidarity pact") and the Childhood contract which enhances and supplements all of its child protection and return-to-work actions. It is attentive to the partnerships that will take over these schemes.

### **Education**

The law places on *départements* the responsibility for constructing, maintaining and equipping schools. In this regard, *départements* have managed technical, non-skilled and service personnel since the law of 13 August 2004.

More generally, educational success is a priority for the departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône*.

It has also resolved to actively promote knowledge acquisition initiatives, in particular by making digital tools more widely available within all secondary schools in the *Département*, providing practical support (return to school kit) and financial aid for cultural, educational and sporting initiatives for school children (*carte Cjeune*). This aim to provide the best possible environment and resources to secondary school pupils is set out in the Charlemagne plan. Adopted in 2017, it provides 2.5 billion Euros over 10 years for the design and implementation of the secondary schools of the future.

The departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* also vigorously supports higher education and research projects, which generate innovation and development in the region.

### **Planning and development**

The general action programme of the *Département* includes:

- Roads (development, management, maintenance, road traffic accident prevention), which was provided for in the MAPTAM and NOTRe laws, and then the 3DS law;
- Fishing ports and marinas;
- Rural equipment, land consolidation, property development, managing rural water in light of the priorities set by *communes*.

The *Conseil départemental* of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* deploys a highly global and structural vision of this power which goes beyond planning in the strictest sense and instead focuses more widely on regional development and enhancement with a view to combating global warming. Accordingly, it invests to protect and develop employment and businesses, but also to increase the attractiveness of the area while putting carbon neutrality at the centre of the initiatives deployed.

Thus, the *Département* facilitates the establishment of innovative businesses and the long-term success of major facilities or projects (EuroMediterranean, Grand Port Maritime de Marseille, ITER, the Henri Fabre hub, The Camp, the naval repair hub La Ciotat)<sup>15</sup>.

Finally, more widely, the departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* is proposing financial aid to realise quality of life enhancing projects (nurseries, libraries,...) for all *communes* and inter-communal organisations within its geographical jurisdiction. The various mechanisms proposed systematically incorporate a "sustainable development" aspect in order to ensure the preservation of biodiversity, resource saving (land, water) and reduction of carbon energy consumption.

## Culture

This power places *départements* under a responsibility for creating and managing lending libraries, archiving services and museums, if any, in the *département*.

More globally, the departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* is a major participant in promoting and supporting cultural initiatives. The *Département's* museums host large scale events forging prestigious partnerships (with the Vatican, the Gehry Foundation or the Louvre for example).

In addition to the *Département's* local libraries (ABD) which regularly host exhibitions, the *Département* also provides a free exhibition space in Aix-en-Provence, in association with renowned interlocutors such as the *Maison Européenne de la Photographie*, as well as an artists' residence in Saint-Martin-de-Crau. It has created "Marseille series stories" devoted to series adapted from literary works. In partnership with the Centre Pompidou, it has opened the *Consigne à Images*, a centre for initiation in the visual arts for 6-16 year-olds, in the old customs building of the Old-Port in Marseille. The *Département* promotes numerous initiatives emphasizing its heritage (gastronomy); it supports structural and innovative projects such as the Artplexe complex located in Canabière and boosts local performing arts by supporting facilities such as the Friche de la Belle de Mai or the Gymnase theatre.

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<sup>15</sup> EuroMediterranean is the largest urban regeneration and economic, social and cultural development project in Southern Europe. It spans an area of 480 hectares in the heart of the Marseille metropolis, between the commercial port, the Old Port and the TGV terminal. This project is classified as project of national interest (*Opération d'Intérêt National*). Its extension includes plans for an additional 170 hectare development.

The *Grand Port Maritime de Marseille* plays a central role in the structure of the *Département*, and for this reason, the departmental Council has formed active partnerships through multi-year contracts. The challenge is to adapt its container ship capacity to the current expansion in container traffic, to support the Port in competing with the major European ports, to strengthen its twin role as a quadrimodal and industrial platform, whilst encouraging environmentally respectful practices and customs.

The ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) project is an international research project on thermonuclear fusion acknowledged as being the source for future energy. The idea: to reproduce the sun's energy on Earth using thermonuclear fusion.





©Made in Marseille - Streetfood festival ©CD of the BDR



©CD13 –Arlaten museum

©CD13 – MDAA

Above and beyond its cultural areas of responsibility, the *Conseil départemental* of Bouches-du-Rhône has opted to develop a more global responsibility in the area of sustainable development, to safeguard and promote its geographical assets through tourism, environmental conservation and participation in major events (2024 Olympic Games, national conferences on world biodiversity at the *Hôtel du Département*) and its support for the network of not-for-profit organisations.

**Local administration**

The Département’s various services are responsible for preparing and executing decisions taken by plenary Assemblies and standing committees.

At 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, 7,229 permanent staff are employed by the Département, of which 6,448 incumbents, 262 trainees and 519 contracted agents. In addition to this staff, there were 131 non-permanent contractual staff, 101 temporary staff, 44 civic service volunteers, 48 apprentices and 28 staff on loan to the Département.

The executive management body (Direction Générale des Services) coordinates these services and oversees the operational implementation of the policy decisions of the Département’s executive.

The *Conseil départemental* of the Bouches-du-Rhône leads an exercise in local democracy via the Provence general forum (Conseil de Provence), a concerted initiative bringing together all interested

stakeholders The work of this body is intended to inform the public policies conducted by the local authority.

At the same time, the Département is involved in partnership schemes (contract for the future, multi-annual plans for the métropole), which targets in particular:

- ecological and energy transition,
- multi-Moodle mobility,
- higher education, research and innovation,
- developing the uses of digital,
- sectors of the future (energy, health, logistics).

For nearly 20 years, and with a view to motivating its representatives, the departmental Council of the Bouches-du-Rhône has implemented a public services charter and has appointed an ethics consultant in accordance with the law dated 20 April 2016.

The Département has also established a "compliance and risk management" unit. Attached to the assistant audit, compliance, management control department of the legal affairs, risk control and audit Department, this unit is responsible for drawing up and overseeing risks mapping, the programme for the prevention of breaches of ethical conduct and the local authority's data compliance. This relies on establishing an anti-corruption framework, instilling a culture of transparency and ethical behaviour, deploying an internal control and ethical risks management mechanism. A code of good conduct has been circulated, one aimed at elected officials and the other at the administration. Both set out the principles to be respected, the risk situations and the role of each person.

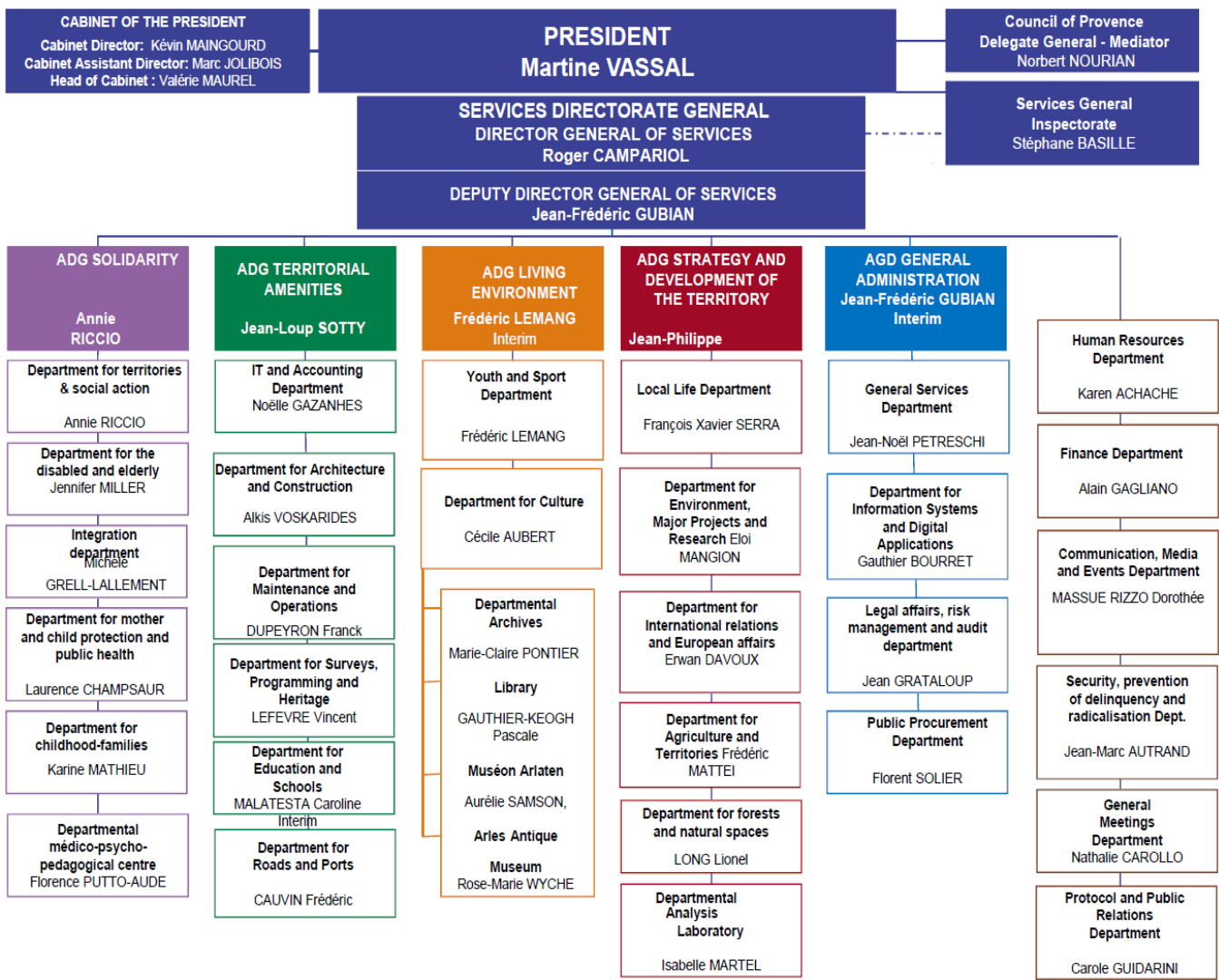
Finally, the Département strives to achieve carbon neutrality through the deployment of a low-carbon strategy (objectives, actions, measurement indicators). Similarly, a departmental biodiversity strategy has been defined for 2022-2027 and is gradually being rolled out, relying where necessary on the departmental analysis laboratory via, for example, the health monitoring of wildlife ("one health" principle).

The fight against global warming is now an issue of community management (travel, asset management, daily operation of services) as well as the policies implemented (mobility, assistance to municipalities, education, tools and assistance to individuals for the estimation of the solar potential of roofs as well as for the thermal renovation of their housing and indeed rain water recovery).

The operations of construction as well as maintenance and upkeep of the heritage incorporate the reduction of the consumption of fossil fuel energy, resource saving and the preservation of biodiversity through, for example, the installation of solar panels on the roofs of the colleges, the installation of nesting boxes, the greening of the spaces (digital tool Sesame 13 allowing the precise selection of the varieties and species to be favoured according to the sites concerned) and improved ground drainage techniques.

Agents are mobilized as part of awareness-raising actions (national biodiversity conference hosted at the Hôtel du Département in 2023) as well as workshops with "La fresque du climat". Finally, the Département has launched an extensive awareness, information, advice and guidance campaign "HOP!", for its agents and the general public.

In December 2022, the Département received a "Marianne d'or du développement durable" for its initiatives in this area. Created in 1984, this award recognises the initiatives of local authorities that have the potential to become national benchmarks.



### 3. THE BOUCHES-DU-RHÔNE: A PLACE OF INNOVATION AND PROGRESS

#### 3.1 A privileged geographical location and high-quality airport, maritime port and rail services

Situated at the junction of the Mediterranean arc and the Rhône corridor, the Bouches-du-Rhône's surface area extends to 5,087 km<sup>2</sup> with 280 km of coastline. The territory is criss-crossed by 12,519 km of roads, 492 km of railways and sees heavy river and maritime activity (Rhône-Saône basin, Mediterranean coast).

The Département des Bouches-du-Rhône has excellent communications:

- It is crossed by strategic motorways: the A7 (which serves a North-South axis from Paris to Marseille via Lyon), the A8 (to the Côte d'Azur and Italy), the A54 (towards Montpellier and Spain), the A51 (towards the Alps), the L2 (Marseille city centre bypass, between the A50 and A7 motorways).
- It also has major infrastructure thanks in particular to the Mediterranean TGV, the international airport of Marseille-Provence, and an extensive coastline which opens up the port of Marseille to the major maritime routes.

A Département with a principally urban population, it is nonetheless characterised by a highly diverse landscape. Its natural spaces and agricultural land are carefully protected by public conservation and development policies.



© CD 13 – Ste Victoire



© Made in Marseille – City of Marseille.

The facilities of the port of Marseille, **Grand Port Maritime de Marseille (GPMM)** bestride the seafront over 70Km of coastline, running East to West from Marseille to Fos-Sur-Mer and up to the Port-Saint-Louis-du-Rhône passing via Lavéra. Its activities cover not only passenger transport and cruise ships but also transport of goods and raw materials.

An international port, the GPMM serves 500 ports in 160 countries. According to INSEE (analysis note - May 2023), the industrial and port cluster represents 1,570 establishments and 42,600 permanent employees. It is an essential driver of the development of the territory. It is a global port which has, in Fos-sur-Mer, a unique industrial-port zone of 10,400 hectares (ha) serving northern and southern Europe. Two logistics zones cover more than 3 million m<sup>2</sup> specialising in customs storage and distribution in Europe, by truck, train or river barge.

The port is committed to a dual policy of industrial and energy independence and decarbonization, based on initiatives of its own (electrification of docks, treatment of careening water) but also the hosting of innovative activities. The area currently accounts for a quarter of French industrial CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.

From 2020, an industrial pilot using pyrolysis to recover raw materials was implemented with Elyse technology, which recovers waste and biomass and produces green energy independently of climatic conditions. Similarly, the industrial demonstration unit in Eranova (conversion of algae into bio-based plastic) has been operational since February 2022 and a plant representing an investment of 63 M€ is planned for 2025, with 140 jobs. The H2V group must develop 36 ha in Fos, to produce 600 MW of green hydrogen. The 6 production units planned represent an investment of 910 M€, the production of 84,000 tonnes/year of renewable hydrogen by water electrolysis, 165 direct and 100 indirect jobs. The site should also produce 28,000 tonnes of low-carbon hydrogen transformed into 140,000 tonnes of ethanol, capable of supplying the shipping company CMA CGM's fleet. In total, 3,000 new jobs are expected to be generated.

Finally, in 2022, GRT Gaz announced the production of e-methane from renewable hydrogen and CO<sup>2</sup> from the recycling of industrial fumes (Jupiter 1000 project). Chemist KemOne, for its part, has brought into circulation two self-propelled linkage devices that avoid the emission of 2,000 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup>/year.

A low-carbon steel plant (manufacture of direct reduced iron for the production of green steel), GravitHy, is to be established in Fos with estimated investments of 2.2 billion euros (Bn€) and 3,000 jobs, including 500 direct and non-delocalisable jobs. The project is scheduled to enter production in 2027, for the direct benefit of the steelmakers Arcelor and Asco present on site. This will lead to a 5% reduction in annual CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in France.

Finally, FOS was chosen for the installation of an offshore wind farm, with a production capacity of 250 MW, which could be increased to 500 MW. This operation will complete EDF's large offshore pilot farm (3 machines supplying the equivalent of a city of 40,000 inhabitants, built and assembled on site) off Port St Louis. The floats will also be manufactured and assembled on site, an area of 80 ha having already been reserved. About twenty wind turbines are planned with a capacity of 250 MW, and potentially 750. Commissioning is planned for 2030.

In order to allow the development of these projects, RTE will build a new electrical axis connecting the GPMM and the lower Rhône Valley, with a capacity of 400,000 volts. The President of the Republic, visiting Marseille at the end of June 2023, mentioned the installation of EPR nuclear reactors in the Marseille-Fos basin in order to satisfy increased energy needs.

The GPMM and the Asco Fields industrial park are both among the sites identified by the Government for the "Made in France" project, aimed at reviving the country's industry (industrial site guaranteeing short and controlled time frames for the construction of new factories). Three ecological transition contracts were signed in late 2023, demonstrating the site's industrial concerns' commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 45% by 2030.

With regard to freight, the surrounding inland area extends principally through Provence and the Rhône valley, but also extends north thanks to a dense network of lines of communication enabling the port to confront its northern counterparts. Onshore connections are provided by the road and motorway network (A7 motorway), the railway lines of the right bank (exclusively freight) and left bank of the Rhône and by the Mediterranean TGV and also by the Rhône and Saône large capacity canal system and two oil pipelines (south-European and Mediterranean-Rhône) and gas pipelines.

A new liquefied natural gas (LNG) container loading offer was launched by Elegy and Delta Rail, using multimodal platforms powered from LNG terminals.



Finally, Fos plans to become a hydrogen hub, building on the many projects in this area: the HYNframed network of GRT Gaz, which will connect the site to Manosque, a storage location; the BarMar (or H2Mer) hydrogen pipeline linking Portugal and Barcelona to Fos, with an extension to Germany. These facilities will complement the production or conversion of hydrogen carried out on site. HYNframed will offer a capacity of 200,000 tonnes, i.e. 1/5 of French consumption and a quarter of the national target for 2030. In addition to these facilities, the area has both large groups (GRT Gaz, Engie, Totalenergies, EDF, Air Liquide), small and medium sized enterprises (SME) (Helion Power, Proviridis) and start-ups (HySilabs, Alcrys).

The Port of Marseille Fos is also recognized as a smart port 2.0 having received the international Gold IT Award awarded by the IAPH (International Association of Ports and Harbors). Leader of the “French smartport in Med” project, the port presents itself as a pioneer of supply chain management information systems, and the French no. 1 in community cargo management systems (CCS)<sup>16</sup>, its efforts in deploying digital solutions are facilitating trade.

The port is the fourth largest European port<sup>17</sup> and the no. 1 in France in terms of cruise passenger numbers. In 2023, there were 626 stopovers and 4 million passengers, of which 2.5 million disembarked<sup>18</sup>. According to the President of the Marseille-Provence cruise association, this represents 4,000 jobs in Marseille. Major efforts are being made to limit the nuisance associated with these operations (reduction of ship speeds, new fuels for manoeuvring or LNG, electrification of quaysides). However, further thought will be required in terms of sustainable tourism, which has now become a necessity.

The 2023 financial year ended with an overall traffic of 72 million tonnes (77 in 2022) and a turnover of 210.5 M€ (+10.9% compared to 2022). As with other ports, container traffic has suffered due to the attacks in the Red Sea (10% of international trade), forcing ships to divert via the Cape of Good Hope. For its part, the solid bulk sector faced the consequences of the shutdown of an Arcelor Mittal blast furnace.

However, investments amounted to 76 M€, with 118 M€ planned for 2024, aimed in particular at reducing the consumption of carbon-based energies and developing multimodal corridors with a view to developing infrastructure for the development of the Marseille-Rhône-Saône axis as set out in the Government's "*Marseille en grand*" plan.

The GPMM is committed to the Déos project, which plans for the deployment of offshore wind turbines on an 80ha platform, supplemented by floating storage areas. In total, 550 M€ is earmarked for investment.



© La Tribune- GPMM



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<sup>16</sup> Source: CCIMP; L'Antenne; Wavestone website

<sup>17</sup> Source: Eurostat, November 2022

<sup>18</sup> Source : GPMM

**The Marseille-Provence** International Airport has seen a constant increase in traffic brought about in particular by the arrival of low-cost airlines. **Marseille Provence 2 (MP2)** is the first low-cost terminal in Europe. Located 20 minutes from Marseille's business districts, the airport recorded almost 11 million passengers in 2023. Between 12 and 13 million are expected by the year 2030. Traffic has changed significantly since the health crisis, with a fall in business travel (development of videoconferences) in favour of visiting friends and family and leisure and low-cost travel. The airport offers 129 destinations, with 37 countries covered with 34 airlines. The Marseille-Shanghai route has been operational since July 2024.

The airport launched a plan in 2015 to invest 500 M€ over 10 years. This includes the extension of Terminal 1 whose surface area has been increased to 85,000 m<sup>2</sup> and which was inaugurated on 17 June 2024. The airport hopes to be self-sufficient in energy by 2030.

Open 24/24, Marseille-Provence Airport is also the leading French and west Mediterranean airport for express freight<sup>19</sup>. The total freight carried in 2023 was 55,134 tonnes and a new Tripoli service began in 2024. 366 people work here, with a total of 140 businesses and 4,500 jobs<sup>20</sup>.

The Funitel, a cable car project linking the Vitrolles railway station to the airport via the Airbus Helicopters site, will improve services. With two cables 5 m apart, the Funitel will have three cabins for 80 to 100 passengers. The cabins will connect infrastructure 2km apart in just a few minutes. This project, valued at 31 M€, will be co-financed by the Aix-Marseille-Provence metropolitan area, the aircraft manufacturer and the airport.

Its commissioning is announced for 2027. Currently, one in five passengers travel to or from the airport by public transport.



©Marseillaéroport –Marseille Provence Airport

The Département des Bouches-du-Rhône is characterized by **a dense rail network**: it has nearly 500 km of operational railway line (37% of the rail capacity in the Région PACA), compared to a département average of 309 km, both for goods and passenger transport. It also hosts the Mediterranean TGV line.

The **Mediterranean TGV** puts Marseille within three hours of the capital. As regards railway services and to meet travel needs along the coastline from Marseille to Italy, the *Département* is participating actively in discussions relating to the New Provence Côte d'Azur Line which will develop daily train services particularly around Marseille and reduce travel time between the major agglomerations of the Mediterranean coast.

<sup>19</sup> Source : Téma website- Transport and logistics.

<sup>20</sup> Source : Airport – June 2024

This project, confirmed by the investment programme presented to the infrastructure consultation committee in September 2018, includes the development of the St Charles railway station plateau in Marseille and the construction of an underground station.

With the Arles river port, a member of the Med-Link network, like GPMM, the Département has become **one of leading platforms for multi-modal transport air-rail-sea-river-road**. It is traversed by three freight euro-corridors: the North Sea-Mediterranean corridor (Marseille-Rotterdam), the Mediterranean corridor (Madrid-Budapest/Kiev), and finally the Marseille-Genoa corridor (since June 2018). It hosts the marshalling yard at Miramas (10% of national freight<sup>21</sup>) and a new combined transport project representing 18 M€ of investment in a 22 ha platform at the Fos-Tonkin site meeting decarbonisation requirements. This should be operational in 2025 offering new railway lines to eastern France, Germany and Belgium.

A new organization for rail freight in the eastern and western basins of the GPMM is also planned, using the Mourepiane site but also the Miramas station with 33.5 M€ in investments. The river port of Arles, for its part, plans an investment of 6 M€ to adapt its facilities (construction of a rail terminal, LNG and hydrogen fueling station). A new jetty and electric charging stations have been in service since November 2023.

In May 2024, the Compagnie Nationale du Rhône (CNR, the river concessionaire) launched a call-for-projects for the development of 18.6 ha to develop the industrial and port site, by establishing industrial enterprises, which is itself conditional on the use of bulk transport (rail or river).



© Plan Rhône – Slipway Arles

Logistics, together with transportation/transport and warehousing, provides 40,000 jobs and 1,700 firms (including 13 of the leading 25 shipowners worldwide) producing 5.5 Bn€ in turnover and 3.4 million m<sup>2</sup> of warehouse space<sup>22</sup>. It also provides a wide choice of training opportunities ranging from the CAP to Bac +5 (with for example, AFT-OIFTIM FC, being a benchmark and Tangram, the campus sponsored by CMA-CGM which opened its doors in 2023). Finally, it offers a very dense network of applied research organisations (*radio frequency identification* (RFID) and *machine-to-machine* solutions dedicated to logistics) and relies on the French institute of science and technology for transport, development and networks (IFSTTAR).

The worldwide headquarters of CMA-CGM (No. 3 worldwide in maritime container transport) provides 3.000 jobs in Marseille<sup>23</sup>. The shipping company is working on multiple projects and in 2021 acquired a terminal in the Port of Los Angeles, and also invested in the port of New York.

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<sup>21</sup> Source: Miramas Town Hall

<sup>22</sup> Source: Inestinprovence

<sup>23</sup> Source: CMA CGM



In 2021 and 2022, it acquired Ingram Micro CLS, invested in Colis Privé and bought GEFCO, a specialist in the rail transport of new vehicles. In March 2024, CMA-CGM acquired the logistics branch of the Bolloré Group, entering the top 5 global players in the sector<sup>24</sup> and now offering a complete service to its customers. Finally, the shipping company has announced an investment of 200 M€ in the fund provided by the State for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships. The normalization of tariffs after the sharp increase in prices in the post-covid period has not had a major impact, and the group has confirmed its orders for new vessels while bringing into service, since February 2024, the new generation container ships that meet its fleet-greening requirements.

With the Power to Gas (“Jupiter 1000”) demonstrator, the Département has the first NGV (natural gas vehicle) station in the port zone for heavy goods vehicles in the PACA region with six dedicated platforms: Clésud, Fos-Distriport, Saint-Martin-de-Crau, La Feuillane, the Marseille-Provence airport platform, the Airbus Helicopters-Daher logistics centre and Parc des Florides. A 7<sup>th</sup> is planned by the GPMM.

The logistics sector boasts numerous international businesses such as Castorama (GB), CEVA and Office Dépôt (USA), Distrimag, ID Logistics (FR), Ikea (Sweden), Katoen Natie (Belgium), Kuehne & Nagel (Switzerland), Mattel, Carrefour, Danone and also Maisons du Monde.

It also has a network of specialist digital companies, offering innovative traceability solutions throughout the supply chain (Tagsys, Smart packaging solution, Editag, Traxens).



© CMA CGM

### **Major planning and development operations**

**Euroméditerranée** is a project to boost the attractiveness and influence of the Marseilles metropolis. Considered the largest urban regeneration project in Europe, it involves the rehabilitation of a 480-hectare area between the port, the Old Port, and the TGV station.

The objective of this programme is to promote the development of Marseille’s characteristic function as the hub of exchange an interface between Europe and the Mediterranean, to attract upper echelon French employment and facilitate the establishment of new businesses, in particular in the new technologies sector. At the end of 2024, the Département's in-principle contribution will amount to 115.6 M€ for a total investment of €6.8 billion (€1.5 million in public funds and 5.3 Bn€ in private funds) under the Euromed 1 and Euromed 2 phases (first phase of extension and phase 1a).

Extending over 480 hectares including 40 green and public spaces, the project has since 1995 involved the construction of 18,000 new homes and the renovation of 7,000 homes, the offer of 720,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices with 40,000 inhabitants and 5,300 businesses. Almost 43,500 jobs have been created (3<sup>rd</sup> ranked business district in the region) with 40 ha of green and public spaces<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Source: Les Echos, 01/03/2024

<sup>25</sup> Source: Euroméditerranée

With the Thassalia and Massiléo seawater loops and an "Ecocité" label obtained in 2009, the operation is displayed as a "sustainable Mediterranean city". The perimeter will host at the beginning of the 2024 school year an international school campus, running from primary to sixth-form.



© EPAEM- Euroméditerranée

**PIICTO** was formed from an association of major industrial stakeholders in the Industrial Port Zone, in consultation with the GPMM, in order to consolidate the existing strengths of the area and increase its attractiveness. The project is established on a 1,200-hectare site (with 600 hectares for development), including an innovation platform (**INNOVEX**); this involves 5 million tonnes of maritime traffic, 17 companies, and 3,000 jobs (direct and sub-contracted). The platform was chosen by Business France as one of its 50 "Choose France" turnkey sites.

PIICTO is an essential cog in the decarbonisation strategy of the industrial-port zone. It supports the Sirius programme (Southern Industrial Regenerative Synergies) which stimulates structuring projects to reduce the area's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (18 MT/year, i.e. 25% of France's industrial emissions). This programme has obtained State aid to conduct engineering and feasibility studies, making it possible to list industrial projects contributing to decarbonising (CO<sub>2</sub> capture, recovery and sequestration networks; hydrogen; steam recovery).

**Aix-Marseille French Tech Région Sud** came into being on 12 November 2014. This southern digital metropolis project brings together local authorities and six support facilities. It revolves around the Belle de Mai Media Centre, the Château-Gombert and Arbois technopoles (specialising in cleantech), and the Constance site, and the label of "European Capital of Innovation" awarded to the Aix-Marseille-Provence metropolitan area at the end of 2022.

French Tech is developing in 3 directions: the economy, planning and the citizen. French Tech has 25,000 start-ups and generates 1.1 million jobs<sup>26</sup>. It has raised nearly 9 Bn€ in funds in 2023 and ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in Europe for patent filings<sup>27</sup>. The French Tech Aix Marseille Région Sud has 500 members and raised 330 M€ in 2022. The main sectors are cleantech, health and tourism/cultural and creative industries<sup>28</sup>. Nine of the sixteen start-ups forming the regional delegation selected for the CES in Las Vegas 2024 come from the Bouches-du-Rhône.

Among the delegation of 37 start-ups selected for the Vivattech 2024 exhibition (which brings together 120 countries, and 3,500 exhibitors, including 3,000 start-ups, in Paris), 17 are from the Bouches-du-Rhône.

<sup>26</sup> Source: Les Echos, 16/10/2023

<sup>27</sup> Source : Le Figaro, 18/10/2023

<sup>28</sup> Source: French Tech Aix Marseille 2023 business report

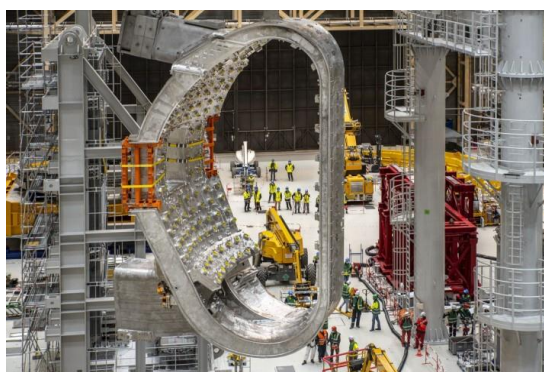
Finally, **ITER** is a unique international collaboration to construct a centre for research and physics studies in the field of controlled fusion. The programme unfolds at the atomic research centre (*Centre d'Etudes Atomiques or CEA*) in Cadarache (Saint-Paul-Lez-Durance) and covers 180 hectares. Today, around 6500 people work for the ITER programme in Saint-Paul-lez-Durance (ITER staff, subcontractors, temporary staff, European Domestic Agency F4E personnel and their subcontractors, workers). As from 2019 and until 2024, the construction and assembly of the machine are expected to involve between 1,000 and 1,500 people. Since 2007, 9.57 Bn€ in contracts have been awarded, of which 5.77 Bn€ to French companies, 78% (4.52 Bn€) of which to companies in the PACA region. A study by the European Commission (2021) showed that for the period 2008 to 2019, the economic impact of the ITER programme on the European economy was largely positive. Gross value added (total value minus input costs) amounted to 1.74 Bn€. An estimated 29,500 (direct and indirect) jobs have been created throughout the zone. For every job directly related to ITER operations, the study estimated that another was created indirectly, throughout the supply chain or as a result of salary spending.

During the reactor's operational phase, as from 2025, ITER will employ 1000 people including 400 scientists. The total investment linked to the project from the construction of the apparatus until it is dismantled, initially estimated at 18.91 Bn€, is now expected to be 25 Bn€.

Russia is contributing to the project by supplying a part necessary for the reactor. However, this is not planned in the near future due to project delay, and European industry would only be able to supply this component within a longer timeframe. The work carried out has prompted a number of private initiatives also exploring the possibilities of thermonuclear fusion, and in March 2024 the German government announced a 1 Bn€ investment programme to build its own fusion power plant in 2040.



©ITER – The site



©reporterre- ITER

### 3.2 Appeal of an innovative region

The Bouches-du-Rhône is a meeting place between the two Mediterranean shores. The EuroMediterranean project, especially, will attract strategic decision-making centres.

Marseille, **second diplomatic centre in France**, hosts 70 consulates and more than 20 international organisations: the World Bank, the World Water Council, United Local Cities and Governments (**CGLU**), Medcoop, the International Organisation for Migration (**IOM**), the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (**UNIDO**), Ubifrance (the French international business development agency), the Marseille Centre for Mediterranean Integration - Mediterranean office for economic cooperation (**CMI-OCEMO**), the Development Research Institute (**IRD**) and the Mediterranean Institute, the office of the International Organisation for Migration or indeed the technical Secretariat of the LenCd (Learning Network for Capacity Development).



Marseille would like to position itself as a hub for trade with Africa (growing market and future talent pool), via its direct links (maritime, air) with the main African and European metropolises. A collective initiative “Provence Africa connect” has been launched, to boost links already forged as part of the support schemes like Diafrikinvest, cross initiatives such as Emerging Valley (2000 people from 70 countries, aiming to build bridges between Africa and Europe) or AfricaLink, and indeed cooperation in the spheres of education and culture with Med’Innovant Africa.

Since November 2022, Marseille has been the station for the 2Africa cable, the longest in the world. In 2023, Provence Promotion, the region's economic development agency, supported 71 establishment projects, including 14 from Africa. In May 2024, the first Algerian-French symposium on the maritime economy was held in Algiers. The aim is to develop links between the two ports of Marseille and Algiers.

For its part Marseille, in March 2024, together with Lyon and Paris, hosted meetings with Algeria, focusing on innovation, decarbonisation of the maritime sector and renewable energies. Algeria is the main partner of the port of Marseille and a "green corridor" project has been discussed.

The Département is also a tertiary “hub”, the second largest centre in France for financial services, home to the regional headquarters of BNP Paribas (acting through its Securities Services business), AON administration centre France or MAIF.

(a) **An internationally prominent centre for excellence in higher education and research<sup>29</sup>**

All of the region’s universities merged on 1 January 2012 to form the Aix-Marseille University (AMU) which is today the largest multi-disciplinary university in the Francophone world. It brings together 80,000 students, including 10,000 international students and 5 large campuses extending over 4 départements. AMU is a significant local employer with 8000 employees.

Ranked 7<sup>th</sup> equal best French university in the 2023 Shanghai classification, AMU offers education in all subject areas, offering 1,100 diplomas, 17 units, 12 doctoral schools, 3,300 doctoral students (of which 39% international) and a budget of 817 million euros in 2024.

AMU has been ranked amongst the eight French centres of excellence recognised by an international jury under the “invest for the future” programme: for this purpose the AMIDEX foundation was established, then funded to implement high level research programmes.



© AMU – Aix Marseille University



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<sup>29</sup> Source : AMU website

AMU is a recognised centre for research excellence. It has 120 research facilities, 113 research units, and 9 federative facilities linked to the most important research organisations (National Scientific Research Centre (CNRS), National Health and Medical Research Institute (INSERM), Development Research Institute (IRD), National Agronomics Research Institute (INRA) and the Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA)). Investment is principally in five major domains: Energy; Environment; Health and life sciences; Advanced Science and Technology; Humanities. AMU has established 350 international cooperation agreements and offers more than 40 diplomas in international partnership.

Selected by the European Commission with 9 other European partners, it also hosts a European university with the "CIVIS" label to nourish societal work and thinking focused especially on Africa. Finally, it has created 15 interdisciplinary establishment institutions to facilitate bridge building between research and training.

Major engineering and management colleges are also present (Polytech, Ecole Centrale, Kedge Business School, Arts et Métiers, Ecole des Mines), a Business Administration Institute, a hospital-university Institute, an Advanced Research Institute whose objective is to promote the emergence and development of inter-disciplinary high-level research initiatives.

Furthermore, opportunities for training in the digital industry have been developed, with 10 recognised digital teaching institutions (*Grandes écoles du numérique*), and a number of digital campus projects (Theodora and the platform in Marseille) joining those already in existence (Voyage Privé in Aix-en-Provence).

More generally, the Département is developing an educational and research ecosystem in collaboration with its sectors of excellence, such as health (Luminy scientific and technological park), ecological transition (Technopôle de l'Arbois), digital (Théodora campus, the platform, Voyage Privé and TheCamp).

In total, at the start of the 2022/2023 academic year, 117,170 students were present in the catchment area of the Aix-Marseille Academy<sup>30</sup>.

#### (b) **Thriving future industries**

In one year, the number of jobs in PACA has increased by 12,356 new jobs, the Région being one of the most dynamic in France behind Brittany and Ile-de-France. The Bouches-du-Rhône accounts for 7,062 jobs<sup>31</sup>.

The economic development agency **Provence Promotion** supported 71 business establishment projects in 2023, representing 1,924 direct jobs created or secured over three years.

International projects account for almost 55% of establishments. Africa is the leading investor in terms of the number of projects, followed by Europe and the United States. The digital economy and port industry sectors are particularly well represented. This agency, cofounded and co-chaired by the departmental Council (until 2016, the Département now accompanying it by supporting its activities) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Marseille Provence, deploys targeted initiatives aimed at large organisations in particular and is multiplying the number of partnership agreements between the major participants in international development (for example: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in the United States).

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<sup>30</sup> Source: Académie Aix-Marseille

<sup>31</sup> Source : URSSAF economic report, June 2024

Bouches-du-Rhône has several zones (Aix-en-Provence / Rousset / Gardanne / Istres / Fos-sur-Mer / Marignane / Etang de Berre) selected by the government in November 2018 among the 124 industrial areas identified as having potential for business development and industrial employment and likely to be offered special support. The Carbon project has just secured the status of project of major national interest.

Bouches-du-Rhône has also been selected by Europe as an area eligible for the Just Transition Fund, offering the prospect of financing economic and industrial projects in line with European priorities, in particular in terms of decarbonising.

### **The knowledge economy**

The Département has a number of **specialist technology centres** in Château-Gombert, Luminy and Arbois. These bring together businesses, research laboratories, associations and training organisations. Developing them presents a major spatial and operational challenge in terms of innovation and sustainable development.

These centres of excellence are located within 8 “competitive clusters” including Secured Communications Solutions and PEGASE, with global ambition in the aeronautical sector. They are heavily promoted by Provence Promotion as part of a specific prospecting strategy.

**Microelectronics** is mainly concentrated in Rousset and the Haute Vallée de l'Arc (150 companies and 7,000 employees according to the Groupement Industriel de la Haute-Vallée de l'Arc).

In PACA, France's leading region for manufacturing electronic components, it represents 10,000 jobs, including 2,800 design engineers and 700 researchers<sup>32</sup>. It has benefited from major investment including the Centre for Integrated Microelectronics Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. Businesses such as ST Microelectronics and Gemalto operate here. Furthermore, in Marseille there is the Centre National de la RFID (national radio frequency identification centre). The SCS worldwide hub (Solutions Communicantes Sécurisées) represents 300 members including 230 start-ups or innovative SMEs. 360 funded projects and more than 1 billion euros in research and development investment involving 485 enterprises and 171 research laboratories<sup>33</sup>.

With regard to **photonic optics**, the Département offers significant potential in terms of R&D, enhanced by the presence of a Technoptic Hotel at Château Gombert and the national OPTITEC competitive cluster.

It is also an important centre for French astronomy and space research, with the presence in the Département of the Pythéas Institute, a multi-disciplinary space science observatory.

The **health-biotechnology** sector is also supporting dynamic development. The health sector represents 170,000 employees, 6,000 public and private jobs in R&D and 41,000 participants. The Région is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading centre for public scientific research and also ranks second in terms of neuroscience activity.

It has 113 public research units and more than 1,000 Phd students per year <sup>34</sup>.

Armed with 47 research laboratories, 600 enterprises including start-ups that have become industrial leaders (Imcheckk, Innate Pharma, HaliuDx) or as having potential (Indienov, Tamba labs, Préapharm, Prometheus, Gunmar, Neosyad, Tafalgie Therapeutics, Embobio Medical, ID Solutions oncology,

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<sup>32</sup> Source : Invest in Provence

<sup>33</sup> Source: Pôle SCS

<sup>34</sup> Source : Invest in Provence

Inclusive Brains), recognised companies (Laphal Industrie, Innodiag, Ipsogen, Euros, Provepharm, Immunotech, Isotron), international groups such as Siemens Health Service, GE Médical, Hill-Room and a global competitive cluster (Eurobiomed, the leading regional health hub in France with 427 members including 370 enterprises, 102 M€ raised and 276 M€ invested in research/development in 2023 and 71 accredited research projects), this sector targets microbiology/epidemiology/genetics (IHU Méditerranée Infection and GIPTIS, the largest Euro-Mediterranean Institute specialising in genetic diseases), neuroscience, medical instruments (Supersonic Imagine and Sartorius) and immunology (Marseille Immunopôle, Institut Paoli Calmettes).

As part of France Relance 2030, the State announced the release of 100 M€ for the development of a world-class immunology cluster in Marseille (Marseille immunology biocluster or MIB).



©CD13 – LDA



©lesnouvellespublications - DocCity

The pre-industrial demonstrator Mi-Mabs (PIA) and the DocCity campus project (combining the hosting of biotech, medtech and e-health businesses as well as laboratories and health professional preventive initiatives and medical practices) demonstrate continual development.

The Société d'Accélération du Transfert de Technologies Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur-Corse (SATT SUD EST) helps to develop inventions conceived in research laboratories on the legal (intellectual property), economic (market) and technological levels. It enables businesses to fully benefit from innovations derived from public research in the region in various domains including health and biotechnology, information and communication technology, eco-technology, human and social sciences.

The health crisis has prompted several start-ups in the Département to invest in products or processes to combat the epidemic in liaison with hospitals, the fire-marine service (Marins-Pompiers) or businesses (blood test reading and analysis application, sample testing platform, self-test kits).

After the health crisis, the Eurobiomed hub joined forces with three other French hubs to support the Government's 2030 Health Innovation France plan. The objective is to facilitate market access for companies or labs operating in particular around three target areas: biotherapies, preventive and personalized medicine, and pandemic preparedness.

With 49,000 jobs in the Aix-Marseille area, spread between more than 7,000 companies, the **digital sector's** development remains intact.

The Cleantech incubator located in Arbois is the most award winning in the world with 34 CES Innovation awards. It is the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest technology park dedicated to the environment. 17 new start-ups have established themselves on the site in 2023<sup>35</sup>. In 2023, 5 start-ups from the area were

<sup>35</sup> Source: La Provence, 8/11/2023

winners of the French Tech 2030 programme, which provides support for companies offering breakthrough innovations and 4 start-ups are, for their part, part of the French Tech 120 programme<sup>36</sup>. In 2024, Pikip, which offers mobile solar panel-equipped speakers, was awarded the France 2030 label.

France boasts 2,750 greentech start-ups at the end of 2023 which contributes to the decarbonisation of industry.

The Bouches-du-Rhône region, in addition to the Arbois incubator, has promising organisations: indeed, Pess Energy designs and manufactures zero-emission generators. Dualsun (design of hybrid solar panels) is a French Tech Green20 winner for the year 2023. One technopole company (Hysilabs, which has developed an innovative technology for hydrogen transport) was one of the laureates of the French Tech Green20 in 2022. One of the Arbois start-ups and one located in Marseille were already among the 2021 winners: Ombrea develops “smart” shading for the purpose of creating microclimate conditions for crop growing, and Dualsun.



©régionsudlatribune – Ombrea



©planeteleschos-Isylabs



© Dualsun



© Made in Marseille –Pess Energy

The territory hosts iconic digital companies such as Voyage Privé, Freepro (former Jaguar Networks), Wiko, Avis Vérifiés but also many start-ups. These companies can benefit from the help of a variety of structures specialising in their development such as incubators and accelerators, the high-tech campus TheCamp which opened in October 2017 or La Coque, a dedicated showroom, designed to boost start-ups.

<sup>36</sup> Source: French Tech website; La Provence 14/06/2023 ; French Tech Aix-Marseille website



The Département also offers a range of dedicated training schemes (La Plateforme, Theodora) and the Club Top 20 of the 20 largest companies in Aix-Marseille helped in September 2019 to establish a digital school offering a (free) two-year computer coding course, a digital training course designed for engineers up to BAC +5 and a platform providing continuing education for executives<sup>37</sup>.

The aim is to strengthen the Région as the epicentre for R&D, development of applications and industrialization. Artificial intelligence is also becoming a major avenue.

The region also has a mobile telephony presence: at the Mobile World Congress 2024, seven *pôle SCS* enterprises were present, including two from the Bouches-du-Rhône (smsmode, A2P mobile messaging platform, and lillybelle which offers solutions for measuring and improving network performance).

Multimedia and content software-publishing offer a bright future. The Belle de Mai hub<sup>38</sup>, unique in Europe, has led to the establishment of 260 enterprises and 422 projects brought on through its incubator. It provides around 1000 jobs over 23,000m<sup>2</sup>. Its renovation is planned as part of the "Marseille en grand" plan. The Marseille innovation incubator, meanwhile, has supported 1000 enterprises (50 new start-ups each year). The Bouches-du-Rhône also hosts numerous multimedia content producers and independent videogame manufacturers with 13 Production, Cityvox, Expedia, France 3, Lexis Numérique and Voxinzebox. Image and transmedia businesses having a strong presence.



©tourismermarseille -Pôle la Belle de Mai

©gomet-Genimage

Located in the La Joliette district in Marseille, Genimage is a higher education institution specializing in animation, video games, manga, comics and illustration. Cinema and audiovisual are a major part of the Government's "Marseille en grand" plan. Satis, in Aubagne, was the winner of the call for expressions of interest (AMI) "La grande fabrique de l'image", aimed at boosting the cinema sector, in June 2023. It is one of the few public film schools in France, from bachelor's degree to master's (in 2023 two of its former students won a César for the best visual effects and a Golden Bear in Berlin). In total, two film studio projects (in Marseille and Martigues) and four training projects (Aix-Marseille-Université, Ateliers de l'image et du son, Kourtrajmé and La Platform) were awarded by AMI. In 2023, leading filming destination in France after Paris, Marseille recorded 1,113 filming days (source: municipal cinema office, 2024).

Several projects are planned as part of "Marseille en grand" such as the establishment of a Cinéfabrique school as in Lyon (a preparatory class opened in 2022 at the Belle de Mai and the school itself opened its doors on 11 September 2023), a filming logistics base hosting 6 production teams) or the creation of a Marseille branch of the French film library.

<sup>37</sup> Source: City of Marseille, Digital Marseille

<sup>38</sup> Source: Pôle La Belle de Mai

Provence Campus, which aims to train young people from all over the world in the film and audiovisual professions, was launched in Martigues last June, in partnership with the Marseille film school Kourtrajme.

Since 2011 Marseille has hosted the leading International Web-Series Festival and in 2022 has also hosted the first edition of Cartoonext an event dedicated entirely to digital animation. The Métropole area is the second most important content platform in France.<sup>39</sup>

Today, Marseille is one of the major global hubs for undersea cable. The installation of new cables has raised the area to 7th place worldwide, connecting 43 countries with 4.5 billion users. Since April 2024, the city has a direct link to Singapore. With the commissioning of Digital Realty's fifth data centre in 2025, Marseille should rise to 5th ranking worldwide<sup>40</sup>.

Marseille has 16 undersea cables, 160 national and international telecommunications operators, 6 Internet exchange points and 14 content distribution networks and platforms. Thousands of physical interconnections are housed in the key data centres in Marseille.

Digital realty, leading worldwide datacentre provider has 4 in Marseille. Oracle opened its first French data centre ("cloud region") in Marseille at the end of 2021. Freepro (which has set up its France and Europe headquarters on the Euroméditerranée perimeter) plans to open a second one. The 2Africa cable has been laid end of 2022, offering three times the capacity currently serving Africa. CCIMP plans to create a digital economic and French data aggregating platform, to be established in Marseille ("Africa Data"). The impacts of data centers (space consumption, heat creation) are carefully monitored.

**Smart-city**, meanwhile, illustrates the region's engagement, through new experiments in digital technologies and sustainable development. It offers numerous market opportunities supported by large structural projects whose ambition is to create intelligent urban systems including low-energy buildings, innovative transport networks and connected services for all users. Since October 2023, Marseille has been home to the Mediterranean Institute of the city and territories. An original structure bringing together the schools of architecture, landscape and the Institute of urban planning and regional development, it constitutes an unprecedented centre of expertise for imagining the city of the future.

Controlling energy consumption is a major issue for the region. The Premio project in Lambesc, launched in 2008 by the Capenergies competitiveness cluster, was the first demonstrator of Intelligent Electricity Networks (REI). Today, the PACA region, selected by the State for its Flexgrid project, is continuing the industrial-scale deployment of Smart Grid equipment and technologies. Public and private actors including ERDF and RTE are gearing up to validate large-scale technical and economic solutions. In 2020, Marseille inaugurated the first positive energy site in the metropolis, which gathers heat from stored waste to produce green electricity for the equivalent in energy needs of around 17,000 residents.

The smart city is a driving force behind the Flexgrid programme, which was replaced at the beginning of 2022 by the Energy Systems club, an offshoot of the Cap Energies cluster, which has the same objectives in terms of energy innovation.

Notable among the concrete projects related to Flexgrid is the So FLEX'hy project integrating renewable electricity derived from hydraulic structures, representing an investment of €90m in the Smartseille eco-district facilities in Euroméditerranée 2 (a second eco-city is planned on the same site, bringing the overall real estate complex to more than 300,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space with the construction of bioclimatic positive energy buildings through the use of solar, thermal and photovoltaic energy.

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<sup>39</sup> Source: Ernst & Young analysis, April 2021

<sup>40</sup> Source : La Provence, 30/04/2024

Once connected as planned to Thassalia, France's leading marine geothermal power plant, this housing, public facilities and office space will significantly enrich the real estate offer in the metropolis). Finally, the Cité des Energies innovation platform works, conducted by CEA Tech, touch areas of technological expertise in response to the challenges of Smart Cities (materials, simulation equipment, modeling and software, energy optimization, systems and sensor integration). Start-ups and large groups can come and conduct full-scale tests on their projects<sup>41</sup>.

## **A reinvigorated industry adapted to new challenges**

### **Shipbuilding industry**

Maritime industry, excluding coastal and marine tourism, employs 45,800 people in PACA<sup>42</sup>. A study by Pôle Emploi in 2022 showed that the Bouches-du-Rhône accounted for 6 in 10 salaried jobs. The development of maritime employment is due principally to coastal tourism but also centres around various activity centres: works at sea, on-board personnel, fishing and marine harvests, transformation of marine products, ship building and maintenance, maritime R&D and engineering, port and nautical services, Defence and maritime government administration<sup>43</sup>.

The La Ciotat shipyards have so far been successful in delivering industrial transformation. The creation of maintenance platforms for large and medium-sized pleasure craft has preserved and developed industrial and artisanal know-how in shipbuilding and ship repair. Thanks to this exceptional equipment (the 2,000-tonne boat lift, the 250-tonne Krupp crane, the 660-tonne Krupp gantry crane, the 300-tonne belt lift, the large modular base (between 200 to 330 metres long), the Atlas platform equipped with a lift with a capacity of 4,300 tonnes), the 1,400 jobs at the site (+ 1,000 linked to sub-contracting), the La Ciotat shipyard is now a leading site in the Mediterranean for work on large yachts over 24 metres long. It welcomes 150 yachts per year, including one hundred of over 100 m. The site is considering a new investment plan of around 60 M€. This project includes a new 600-tonne lift for yachts from 40 to 60 m.

The consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict remained very measured, with a single seizure of a Russian yacht in early 2022.



©Boatindustries – La Ciotat Shipyards

Naval repair brings together many specialized companies: MB 92 La Ciotat, Lürssen, Monaco Marine, Foselev, Sud Marine Shipyard, Palumbo Marseille Superyachts, ITM and CNM in particular. These businesses also drive research projects (for example, IXblue and self driving ships). The Marseille site hosting the Monaco Marine platform is an additional asset. The Pôle Mer Méditerranée is helping to boost projects.

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<sup>41</sup> Source: Investinprovence.

<sup>42</sup> Source :France travail, March 2024

<sup>43</sup> Source: Pôle emploi, February 2022

The Marseilles-Aubagne employment zone hosts a number of maritime transport and naval repair/shipbuilding bridgeheads: CMA-CGM and Mediterranean Shipping Company for freight, Intramar for port handling, Moteurs Baudouin.

The yachting sector represents more than 1 Bn€ and 10,000 jobs in the PACA region, split between the tourism and technical ecosystems: 438 M€ and 3,600 jobs for the technical component, and 663 M€ and 6,600 jobs for the tourism component<sup>44</sup>.

## **Aviation industry**

**Airbus Helicopters** is the world's largest civilian helicopter manufacturer and a leading manufacturer of military helicopters. The company's head office is located in Marignane, where it has its main production site in France, the other being in La Courneuve. This site employs nearly 8,000 people.



© Airbus helicopters- The Leopard

The year 2023 saw Airbus Helicopters retain its position as the world leader in civil helicopters. A total of 346 civil and military aircraft were delivered in 2023 and the company now has a 54% share of the global market<sup>45</sup>.

It is anticipated that the 2024 financial year will be driven by orders placed (net 393 in 2023) and new contracts won in the first semester 2024, including one of nearly 2 Bn€ with the German police and another for 17 aircraft for Belgium. In early 2023 Airbus Helicopters also inaugurated a training centre for 10,000 employees, apprentices, suppliers and subcontractors in aviation safety.

Official test flights and development tests, as well as Dassault Aviation's development flights, are carried out at the **125 Charles Monier d'Istres air base**. It is the leading French flight test centre. The hub inaugurated in May 2024 makes the air base 125 the sole departure point for the French military, all arms combined. It is the only defence base hosting Airbus A330 multi-role taker transport, multi-purpose aircraft offering troop transport, logistics and in-flight refuelling.

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<sup>44</sup> Source: regional tourism committee PCAC study, 2023.

<sup>45</sup> Source : Les Echos 23/01/2024 and *Usine nouvelle*, 24/01/2024

With the opportunity of the Jean-Sarrail site (33-hectare plot with 45,000m<sup>2</sup> of built surface area), Thalès Alinea Space could establish a “stratoport” in Istres, a centre for the manufacturing of stratospheric airships which could create more than 300 long-term, skilled jobs and generate 100 to 150 M€ in investment. The site is already home to ARES where it maintains the MB-339 aeroplanes for Red Air (French and European Armed Forces operational training) and the anticipated 18 Mirage 2000.

The TEAM **Henri-Fabre** project, promoted by the State and Airbus, is an unprecedented public-private project. It is based on collaboration between the worlds of industry, research, training, employment, the State and local authorities. The TEAM Henri-Fabre project brings a new industrial model which is developing within a world class ecosystem with key expertise in mechanics, materials and advanced processes as well as digital engineering. The Technocentre is at the heart of this project. It is a space for meetings and for grouping and pooling skills (researchers, teachers, specialized operators), innovative machines and equipment, and premises fit for the purpose. Located in the Florides Park in Marignane, it operates in five sectors (including aviation and transport), supports 200 businesses and 50 development projects each year<sup>46</sup>. The platform for acceleration towards the industries of the future (Praciiis) was inaugurated at the end of 2021. It serves as a testbed for technological “building bricks” such as artificial intelligence or virtual reality, components of the industries of the future.



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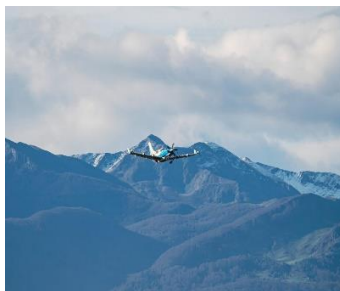
©préfecture Région –TEAM Henri Fabre

The competitive hub Safe Cluster (Security and aerospace actors for the future of the earth) brings together 500 participants (including 350 industrial enterprises, in addition to research and training centres), the majority being located in the PACA region. It has launched a programme with the objective of accelerating the industrial performance of space and aerospace companies, involving 15 SMEs in the region.

With Airbus and Safran, Daher has embarked on the design of a hybrid aircraft. EcoPulse, the hybrid-electric propulsion aircraft demonstrator, successfully completed its first test flight in hybrid-electric mode in December 2023. The demonstrator flew with its ePropellers activated, powered by a battery and a turbogenerator.

<sup>46</sup> Source: Henri-Fabre





© Safran - Ecopulse

The *start-up* Novadem, located in Arbois, has received a new order for 260 drones with the army.

Decarbonization is a major challenge for the aviation sector. The plan to produce e-SAF (synthetic aviation fuel) led by Hy2gen and H2V is in the pipeline. It is based on the construction of a plant in the western basins of the GPMM, capable of producing 50,000 tonnes of e-SAF. It would reduce emissions by 164,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>/year and create 150 jobs<sup>47</sup>.

The aviation, space and defence sector represents a key asset for French growth (between 2024 and 2025, it could provide an additional 0.4 points of gross domestic product (GDP)). However, the sector is facing shortages and recruitment problems<sup>48</sup>.

Given the recovery in traffic and the desire to renew fleets with latest generation aircraft, the aviation, space and defence sector has indicated a need for 25 to 30,000 additional personnel in France in 2024<sup>49</sup>.

For the record, against the background of the covid crisis, the Government announced a 15 Bn€ support plan for civil and military aviation. It is based on investment in research/development projects identified by manufacturers, and two investment funds, one to meet businesses' capital needs, and the second, to support SMEs to digitize and robotise their facilities.

## Industry and energy

**Metallurgy, industrial maintenance, energy and petro-chemicals** are still very present around the banks of the Etang de Berre. Fos and Lavéra account for 26% of French refining with 16.5 million tonnes in 2023<sup>50</sup>. Together with Normandy, the PACA region represents 48% of French petroleum products storage capacity<sup>51</sup>. The Bouches-du-Rhône is home to companies such as INEOS, Exxon mobil, Total, Naphtachimie, Shell, Airgas and Air Liquide.

The south region (including East Occitanie) is home to 550 enterprises and 19,000 employees representing 12% of French chemicals export turnover in 2019<sup>52</sup>. All actors in the value chain are present, from base chemistry to the downstream export sector<sup>53</sup>.

Base chemicals industry is concentrated in the Fos and Etang de Berre zones (Total, Ineos/Petroineos, Lyondell Basell, Kem One, Alteo). A network of SMEs active in the specialty products market is spread across the Région. According to France Chimie Méditerranée, a direct job in the chemicals industry generates 6 indirect jobs.

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<sup>47</sup> Source: PACA Economic and Political Letter, 14 June 2024

<sup>48</sup> Source: *Techniques de l'ingénieur*, May 2024

<sup>49</sup> Source : Aérobuzz – Groupement des Industries françaises aéronautiques et spatiales (GIFAS)

<sup>50</sup> Source: UFIP, June 2024

<sup>51</sup> Spring; Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion, 15 February 2024

<sup>52</sup> Source: France chimie Méditerranée

<sup>53</sup> Source: Région Sud

More generally, the Bouches-du-Rhône accounts for half of the industrial jobs in the Région, which includes 749,315 part-time salaried jobs, increasing by 1.3% over one year<sup>54</sup>. The petro-chemical hub in Berre is one of the largest petro-chemical complexes in Europe<sup>55</sup>. These industries adapt to new technological developments and constraints.

Arcelor Mittal has planned an investment programme to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 35% in 2030. A first phase is based on a pocket oven (73 M€), commissioned in 2024. A second phase provides for the replacement of a blast furnace by an electric arc furnace of 300 MW, with a capacity of 2 MT (200 M€ of investments conditional on State and European aid).

Ascometal has been taken over by the Italian steel group Marcegaglia. The latter plans to invest 600 M€ to increase primary steel production from 150 tonnes to 1.2 million tonnes, in addition to the production of 1.6 to 2 million tonnes of rolled steel coils, from the steel produced on site<sup>56</sup>.

Marseille is expected to be home to the largest biomethane plant in France (Suez Group). This green energy production is expected to supply 8,000 residents, then, ultimately, supply gas for public transport. Arcelor Mittal and Véolia have joined forces with Fos to maximise the exploitation of gases generated by the steel making plant (co-investment of 190 M€ over 3 years to waste no more than 2% of gas produced). Gravithy (an industrial consortium) intends to establish in Fos in 2024 a plant for the production of direct reduction iron using green hydrogen instead of coke. The project, at an estimated cost of 2.2 Bn€, should generate 300 direct jobs and support a further 3,000. TotalEnergies and Engie have announced the construction of the largest site for the production of renewable hydrogen in France at Châteauneuf-les-Martigues. This MassHylia project, which is based on the production of green hydrogen from 100% renewable electricity, was due to come to fruition in 2024 but was then postponed to 2026 due to technical problems encountered by the Cockerill group responsible for supplying the electrolyzers. Finally, CMA CGM launched studies for the construction of a biomethane unit, again in Fos, providing a short-route local supply.

These various production projects are backed by the infrastructure for the transport of the materials produced: a hydrogen pipeline project linking Barcelona and Marseille was announced by the President of the Republic, which will then extend to Germany.

The HyNnframed project, meanwhile, would connect Fos and Manosque where there is a storage site. The territory could therefore eventually become a hub. Since 2018, the CapEnergies competitiveness cluster has had an H<sub>2</sub> club aimed at structuring the hydrogen sector.



@24news – Hydrogenuc Barmar

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<sup>54</sup> Source : URSSAF survey, June 2024

<sup>55</sup> Source: Lyondell Basell

<sup>56</sup> Source: La Marseillaise, 14 June 2024

Finally, Quality Circula Polymers (LyondelleBasell/Suez) plans to establish a plastic waste recycling plant in the industrial-port zone in Arles (circular economy relying on household waste collection), and a combined initiative by Elogy, EréVé, TotalEnergies and CMA/CGM transforms waste into liquid natural gas to supply boats in the Port of Marseille. In Gardanne, a complementary industrial biogas project by methanation is planned at the site of the thermal power plant. In Berre, the Eranova project provides for the manufacture of biomaterials from green algae. Finally, the Fibre excellence Provence paper mill diversified into green power generation by recycling lignin by-products and unused tree bark.

Energy transition is also being implemented through geothermal power station projects, both marine (Engie and Dalkia have invested in the Massiléo and Thassalia networks that use the heat of seawater to heat and cool residential and service industry buildings within the Euroméditerranée boundaries) and terrestrial (in Gardanne, again with Dalkia, the use of flood water from the former mine will provide heating and air-conditioning for an entire eco-district).

Similarly, wind and solar present interesting opportunities. The PACA region remains the 2<sup>nd</sup> sunniest in France, with 2,855 hours in 2023 (source: l'Internaute).

In addition to the Fos wind projects, Peyrolles already hosts one of the largest floating solar farms in Europe, with nearly 44,000 panels supplying the equivalent of 20,000 inhabitants. Solarhona (which brings together CNR, Banque des Territoires and Crédit Agricole) have created a tool to develop photovoltaic projects in the Rhone Valley. In Marseille itself, there is a plan to use the Vallon Dol reservoir to install solar panels representing production of 10 MW.

Carbon announced the construction of a giga factory for the production of photovoltaic cells, then solar panels, for an investment of €1.5 billion, with 3,000 jobs. In addition to the production of cells (5GW/year), modules (3.5 GW/year) and energy (20 GW by 2030), the plant would generate business for the port with 30,000 containers per year. It is due to be inaugurated in late 2026.

The Government intends to invest 5.6 Bn€ towards reducing CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in three industrial sectors: steel-aluminium, chemicals and cement. Support for the conversion of three steel-making blast furnaces, including the Fos furnace mentioned above, should help reduce overall industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in France by 10%. Similarly, 1.2 Bn€ are earmarked to support the decarbonisation of industry, with three award-winning companies in the region.

Decarbonising is now a major challenge for French industry, which recorded 137 net factory creations and 26,400 jobs created in 2023 (source: *Journal des Entreprises*, February 2024). However, industry accounted for 18% of the country's emissions in 2023, with nevertheless a reduction of 54% in greenhouse gas emissions between 1990 and 2023<sup>57</sup>.

Regional industry consumes 16% of the national energy required for industry, and 60% of industrial energy consumption, excluding raw materials, comes from chemicals<sup>58</sup>.

Of the 13 establishments in mainland France that emitted more than one million tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> in 2019, four are in the Bouches-du-Rhône. In Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, industrial emissions contribute hugely to the power of global warming. They account for 41% of gross regional emissions compared to 18% nationally. Three sectors in particular are concerned: chemicals/materials, mining/metallurgy and construction. The Sirius programme aims to change the sectors and the manufacturing process in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (divided by five by 2050).

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<sup>57</sup> Source : SECTEN report, June 2024

<sup>58</sup> Source: INSEE, September 2023



On the other hand, in the case of home-to-work households, the PACA region is the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest emitting region in France<sup>59</sup>.

The Fos area is one of the two highest CO<sub>2</sub>-emitting sites in France. 5 sites in Bouches-du-Rhône are in the list of the 50 sites emitting the most greenhouse gases (11% of emissions from the French economy and 55% of emissions from industry).

The Government's target is to reduce emissions from these sites by 24 MT by 2030, by investing in breakthrough technologies (decarbonized hydrogen, inert anodes). Sequestration and storage of CO<sub>2</sub> could contribute to the removal of an additional 5 MT.



©radiocamargue – Blast furnace Fos



©usinenouvelle – Refinery Fos

The workforce in the **construction** sector reached 52,658 employees (and 5,728 part time equivalent (ETP) part time staff) in the Bouches-du-Rhône at the end of March 2024<sup>60</sup>. The construction sector represents 6% of employment and 11.6% of businesses (at 31/12/2021) and nearly 10% of business start-ups in 2022<sup>61</sup>. These figures are relatively constant.

A number of major businesses are present: SNEF, Travaux du Midi, Guintoli, Cegelec, Dumez, Eurovia Méditerranée, Spie Sud Est. Local authorities in the region have a special tool, the Etablissement Public Foncier Régional to develop housing and, in the case of the Bouches-du-Rhône, commercial property and economically viable land.

After a complicated 2023, the initial 2024 results demand caution, with a decline observed across all sectors: -20.2% of new housebuilding between May 2023 and May 2024 and -18.1% for commencement of new premises construction. In the first quarter 2024, cumulative activity was stagnant (-0.4%) and the production of ready-mixed concrete was down 9%. Business insolvencies increased sharply, with 170 insolvencies (+25%). Conversely, the number of calls-for-tenders for works increased slightly (+2%), and the number of jobseekers fell by 3.7%<sup>62</sup>.

The thermal renovation of buildings promises to be a major project, as everywhere in France. In the Region, the public tertiary sector represents 25,250 buildings and 24.6 million m<sup>2</sup>.

### Agri-food industry

The dynamism of the agri-food sector is down to the favourable natural conditions, permanent sunshine, specific irrigation tools and techniques (*Société du Canal de Provence*) but also to renowned agricultural produce (oil, wine, fruit and vegetables) and established know-how in the exploitation of multiple resources.

<sup>59</sup> Source : Insee, 21/05/2024

<sup>60</sup> Source: CERC PACA, July 2024

<sup>61</sup> Source: INSEE, 27/06/2024

<sup>62</sup> Source: CERC PACA, 05/07/2024

In the Département, agriculture accounts for one third of the land (176,517 ha) with 3,900 farms and 11,560 part-time equivalent jobs.

The Département is the leading French département for the production of tomatoes, curly chicory, lettuce, olives, rice, melons, peaches/nectarines, Guyot pears and watermelon. It is also the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest producer of courgettes, aubergines, peppers, cucumbers, celery and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest producer of AOP rosé wine, pears and figs. Agriculture has adapted, with 56,619 ha and 1,201 farms engaged in organic farming, which ranks the Bouches-du-Rhône in 2<sup>nd</sup> place among metropolitan départements<sup>63</sup>.



@La Provence



@Pour de bon



©Actu



©French fruit and vegetables

Agricultural education providers include 3 public establishments and 10 private establishments, welcoming 2,137 students and 1,011 apprentices in the year 2022/2023.<sup>64</sup>

The agri-food sector represents 5,887 employees at 31/12/2020. Trade in wholesale agri-food products supports 736 businesses and 7,488 employees. Essential oils manufacturing is concentrated among 9 enterprises, employing 94 employees, with an export turnover of 46 M€<sup>65</sup>.

Many large companies are present in the Bouches-du-Rhône including Coca-cola, Danone, Haribo, Pernod-Ricard, Heineken, Grands Moulins Storione, Dole France and even Orangina Schweppes. Alongside these, many SMI/SMEs such as Marius Bernard or Jean Martin, add value to local agricultural production.

With its recognised training providers (Université Européenne Senteur Saveurs, OPCALIM, CRITT Agroalimentaire, Institut Supérieur Européen de Management Agroalimentaire) and robust logistics (1 million m<sup>2</sup> of warehousing in St Martin de Crau, No. 1 regional logistics hub, the MIN des Arnavaux

<sup>63</sup> Source : Agreste, February 2024

<sup>64</sup> Source: Agreste, February 2024

<sup>65</sup> Source: Agreste, February 2024

for its part hosting 100 enterprises and 267 producers on the sidelines), uniting under the umbrella of the European centre for fruit and vegetable innovation (*Pôle Européen d'Innovation Fruits et Légumes* or PEIFL), this sector has been very resilient even in the depths of the pandemic and the Russia-Ukrainian war.

### 3.3 A historically mixed labour market

#### **An unemployment rate which exceeds regional and national averages<sup>66</sup>**

In the first quarter 2024, the unemployment rate in the Département was 8.7% (8.2% in the région PACA and 7.5% in France excluding Mayotte). The annual increase was 0.1 point, slightly lower than in France (+0.4%) and in PACA (+0.2%).

The number of jobseekers (A, B, C) registered at the Jobs Centre in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2024 was 187,490 (449,690 in the région PACA and 5,400,500 in France). The annual increase was 0.1% (stable in PACA and +0.6% in France).

#### **Salaried employment showing slight progress<sup>67</sup>**

In the first quarter 2024, the Département recorded 886,400 salaried jobs, an increase of 1.2% compared to the first quarter 2023. This increase is very slightly higher than for jobs in the Région (0.9%) and the country (0.7%).

#### **An increasingly well trained population<sup>68</sup>**

The Bouches-du-Rhône is characterised by a significant but slightly fewer number of people with no diploma (20.8% compared to 21.3% in the last census) and by an even larger proportion of people with a higher education diploma (36.2%), a slight increase.

Qualification levels and careers pursued are closely related. The share of managers and higher intellectual professions increased slightly, standing at 21%.

#### **Modest hiring prospects<sup>69</sup>**

The 2024 hiring outlook in PACA stands at 247,600 potential jobs, including 88,650 (36%) in the Bouches-du-Rhône. They are mainly located in the Marseille and Aix/Gardanne/Salon basins.

### 3.4 Tourist attractions and recognised quality of life

A welcoming land of trade since ancient times, the Bouches-du-Rhône enjoys a remarkable cultural, natural and historical heritage which attracts 9.9 million tourists<sup>70</sup> generating around 32,000 jobs<sup>71</sup>. Arles is the first-ranked UNESCO World Heritage city and the Radiant City of Marseille is also listed. The Parc des Calanques is the first-ranked peri-urban park in Europe, and the MUCEM, one of the leading local museums in the region, has attracted 1.3 million visitors in 2023 and 450,000 school children<sup>72</sup>. Finally, the 300 days of sunshine per year are a great asset for tourism and cultural activities.

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<sup>66</sup> Source: INSEE May 2024

<sup>67</sup> Source: INSEE June 2023

<sup>68</sup> Source: INSEE, census 2020

<sup>69</sup> Source :*France travail*, April 2024

<sup>70</sup> Source :Provence tourisme, bilan 2023

<sup>71</sup> Source: INSEE, June 2023

<sup>72</sup> Source : France bleu





©CD13 –Arles

©madeinmarseille

The Bouches-du-Rhône’s tourism identity is based on three factors:

- Marseille, a cosmopolitan city of contrast with a long twenty-six century history;
- Provence, with its strong identity, traditions, particular art de vivre and landscape that inspired great artists (Paul Cézanne, Vincent Van Gogh, Jean Giono, Raoul Dufy etc.), ;
- the Camargue, a wild landscape with its own specific identity.

Each of these areas, although having their own identity, presents a harmonious pallet and contributes to the cultural and natural richness of the Département.



© Camargue productions



© thetrainline -Aix-en-Provence.

The Département has numerous well known sites and places of interest including the Sainte Victoire, the Alpilles, the Camargue, la Sainte-Baume and the Calanques National Park (exceptional natural space and the leading land and sea, urban-adjacent national park).



Vincent van Gogh – The harvest – Foundation van Gogh, Amsterdam.

Tourism in PACA provides 124,000 salaried jobs<sup>73</sup>. According to the PACA regional tourism committee, this sector represents 25,000 SME/VSE, 20 Bn€ in revenue and 13% of GDP. PACA is the 2<sup>nd</sup> tourist region in France (for international tourism) behind Ile-de-France<sup>74</sup>. In the Département, tourist spending is estimated to be 3.4 Bn€<sup>75</sup>. The Département is 3<sup>rd</sup> behind the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes, for tourist visits, with almost one quarter of the total for PACA<sup>76</sup>. The Bouches-du-Rhône is the seat of the first tourism incubator in Provence, Provence Travel Incubator. A number of start-ups have already emerged such as Phonomade, Estay and also Left for work. The *start-up* Deeplayer guides tourists, and *Carnets de voyage* facilitates the organisation of holidays through its platform.

During the crises, the sector has been paid particular attention with various, national or local recovery plans, and it should continue to adapt to the new normal (acceleration of digitalisation, offer of “experiences” rather than organised tours, cultural and gastronomic partnerships).

In 2023, tourist overnight stays in the Bouches-du-Rhône amounted to 25.8 million, a figure comparable to 2022 and significantly up compared to 2019 (+11%). The return of foreign clientele should be noted, especially German, American, British, Italian, Swiss, Spanish and Belgian<sup>77</sup>. While rising prices (inflation) had a certain limiting effect, the Rugby World Cup, the Pope's visit and the number of long weekends during the month of May, all helped to increase tourist numbers.

For 2024, professionals are optimistic: Tourist numbers are generally comparable to the previous year. The decline seen during the Easter weekend can be explained by the calendar, and poor weather. For the following months of the 2024 season, bookings are 18% higher than those recorded in 2023 on the same date<sup>78</sup>.



© marseille-tourisme – Palais Longchamp

©marseille-tourisme -Mucem

Culture and sport largely contribute to quality of life which is recognised as one of the areas assets.

The cultural sector employs 42,900 people in PACA, or 2.2% of total employment (2.5% in Bouches-du-Rhône) and is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in France excluding Ile-de-France. Salaried employment is particularly focused in the areas of Arles and Aix-en-Provence. The Bouches-du-Rhône accounts for 47% of the Région's cultural jobs, with Marseille alone accounting for a third of these jobs<sup>79</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> Source : Insee, June 2023

<sup>74</sup> Source: Regional Tourism Board

<sup>75</sup> Source: Provence Tourism, March 2024

<sup>76</sup> Source : Provence Tourism

<sup>77</sup> Source: Provence Tourism

<sup>78</sup> Source: Provence Tourism

<sup>79</sup> Source: INSEE, June 2023

The cultural and creative industries account for 1.2% of regional GDP in terms of value added. The region is home to 6,800 businesses in the cultural sector, or 3.4% of all businesses in the commercial and non-commercial sectors<sup>80</sup>.

The Bouches-du-Rhône offers 664 historical or listed monuments, 41 museums of France, including one national, the Mucem, a FRAC, 19 alternative places and 6 art schools, two of which are national. Thirteen certified remarkable heritage sites offer a wealth of treasures, from St Rémy de Provence to Le Tholonet.

Marseille-Provence 2013 European Capital of Culture has enabled the construction of some emblematic facilities enabling it to show off internationally its rich and diverse cultural offering (including music with the Aix-en-Provence, Roque d'Anthéron and Marsatrac festivals, dance with Angelin Prejlocaj and the La Horde collective, photography with the Arles international festival, several national theatres, opera, important exhibitions such as the Carrière des Lumières or the Hôtel de Caumont) and Marseille Cultural Capital 2018 has extended this impact. In 2020, Marseille was the first French city to host the biennial Manifesta (event dedicated to contemporary art).



@Challenges – La Roque Festival

Since 2022, the Cosquer grotto, rebuilt in the Villa Méditerranée, has welcomed visitors (one million since June 2022). The Luma Foundation opened its doors in Arles in June 2021. This 11 ha park is dedicated to contemporary art. Finally, a centre dedicated to urban culture and street art (opening scheduled for 2025) is planned within the boundaries of the Euroméditerranée extension. In June 2024 Marseille also welcomed Artexplorer, a catamaran offering exhibitions in Mediterranean ports as well as the Art Explora festival itself.



©Fondation Luma



©Madeinmarseille – Fondation Luma

<sup>80</sup> Source: DRAC 2023 report



This buoyant sector is bolstered by the sports sector. Having hosted Euro 2016 football matches, Marseille Provence European Capital of Sport in 2017 and two stages of the Tour de France in Marseille in July 2017, Marseille hosted the rugby world cup in 2023, the passing of the Olympic flame, and the sailing events of the 2024 Olympic Games (OG). 12,500 daily visitors were expected for the OG, as well as 330 athletes from 65 countries<sup>81</sup>. As for the Rugby World Cup, in France, it generated 1.8 Bn€ in total spending, including 690 M€ in direct economic impact. The three towns that hosted the most matches (Paris, Saint Denis, Marseille) captured 28% of the economic impact of the event<sup>82</sup>.



@CD13 – Vélodrome stadium



@Les Echos

Whilst the *Stade Vélodrome* is highly symbolic for the collective imagination (local and national), several major sporting events are held regularly in Marseille including football (*Olympique de Marseille*), tennis (Open 13 Provence - ATP), rugby (2020 European Cup finals, World Cup 2023 and final qualifying tournament), beach soccer (World Cup), *pétanque* (Mondial), Marseille Marathon and the Marseille-Cassis 20km run.

The sports and culture sectors were heavily affected by the epidemic and the measures taken to restrict them (lockdowns, ban on gatherings, closure of places open to the public). Today they are no longer facing any restrictions and no external, political or social circumstances are a source of disruption.

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<sup>81</sup> Source: La Provence, 06/07/2024

<sup>82</sup> Source : Ernst and Young report, May 2024

## 4. PUBLIC FINANCE RULES AND BORROWING - SOLVENCY OF THE DEPARTEMENT

### 4.1 Budgetary and accounting rules

Budgetary management and public accounts under the décret no. 2012-1246 of 7 November 2012<sup>83</sup> follow a number of the principles laid down by the general accounts table (“Plan Comptable Général”) applicable to the private sector: accrual basis accounting using the double-entry method (correlation between sources and uses of funds). For both expenditure and revenue, a distinction is made between operating activity (income and expenses) and capital activity (relating to assets).

In addition to a separation between the authorising officer and the accountant, the presentation of the budget must observe 5 main principles:

- 1° the annuality principle: the budget must be adopted every year and budgetary execution follows the calendar year;
- 2° the unity principle: the budget is set out in a single document which itemises and authorises all revenue and expenditure;
- 3° the universality principle: the budget must include all revenue and expenditure items and revenue must cover all expenditure (non-contraction and non-allocation);
- 4° the specificity principle requires that the amount and nature of all budgeted items are precisely defined, hence appropriate budgetary terminology;
- 5° the truth and fairness principle implies that the financial information presented must be exhaustive, consistent and accurate.

Provisions applicable to local authorities are set out in:

- the CGCT: articles L. 1611-1 to L. 1618-2 with respect to the general principles and articles L. 3311-1 to L. 3342-1 with respect to Départements specifically;
- budgetary and accounting instructions: for Départements, the relevant instruction is “M52”;
- since 1 January 2024, all local authorities, including départements, are governed by instruction M57 which until now applied to métropoles and will henceforth harmonise the budgetary and accounting practices of all local authorities.

These texts lay down the various phases of the budgetary process: preparation, execution and control.

#### (a) Preparation of the budget

The *Département’s* budget is the document in which the *Département’s* annual revenue and expenditure are itemised and authorised.

The departmental Council takes several budgetary decisions during the budgetary year: primary budget, budgetary amendments and supplemental budget (restatement of accounting results and deferred credits carried over, as noted in the previous year’s final accounts). In the two-month period prior to the governing Assembly’s examination of the budget, a budgetary policy debate for the financial year and on planned multi-year commitments takes place at a public departmental Council meeting.

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<sup>83</sup> Replacing décret no. 62-1587 of 29 December 1962.



The budget is prepared by the *Département's* executive, but its adoption is within the sole power of the *Département's* Assembly. The budget is voted by type, but also includes a cross-reference presentation by function.

The *Département's* budget comprises an operating section and a capital section showing both expenditure and revenue. It is divided into chapters and articles.

The budget is properly balanced when the operating section and the capital section respectively are adopted in balance, with revenue and expenditure having been truly and fairly assessed and when the levy on operating section revenue transferred to the capital section, added to that section's direct revenue, excluding the proceeds of borrowings, and to appropriations to amortization accounts and reserves, if any, provides sufficient funds to cover annual repayments of principal on borrowings falling due during the financial year.

Up to the adoption of the budget at the latest by 15th April <sup>84</sup>, the *Département's* executive is entitled to collect in revenue and commit, liquidate and order operating section expenditure within the limits set in the previous year's budget. As regards capital expenditure, the executive may, with the authorisation of the governing Assembly, commit, liquidate and order, up to the limit of one quarter of the credits allocated in the previous year's budget (not including credits allocated for repayment of debt). As regards multi-year expenditure included in a programme authorisation (**PA**) voted in previous years, the executive may liquidate and order such expenditure within the limits of the spending credits planned for the financial year in the PA deliberations.

The 2024 Finances Act No. 2023-1322 of 29 December 2023 provides that green budgets are of general application and mandatory from 2024 for all local authorities with more than 3,500 inhabitants. They must present the environmental impact of investments based on a scoring system. It will also be possible to identify the share of debt devoted to investments contributing to ecological transition goals. However, the new political and legislative environment creates a great deal of uncertainty.

#### (b) **Execution of the budget**

The principle of **separation of the authorising officer and accountant** applies to execution of the budget, which the ordonnance of 23 March 2022 on the public managers' financial liability regime has not called into question.

The President of the departmental Council is the authorising officer for Departmental spending and revenues. He keeps an account of expenditure commitments. He commits expenditure and, having verified the factual reality (liquidation), proceeds with the payment order (or mandate), in other words, the act by which he orders payment by the accountant.

Spending must remain within the limits of the budgetary authorisations voted by the governing Assembly (budget, programme authorisations, commitment authorisations) and must act as soon as creditors' rights materialise.

As regards revenue, he records the entity's rights (liquidation) and orders collection and receipt thereof by the accountant by means of a "certificate of revenue".

The President of the departmental Council presents the administrative accounts to the departmental Council annually.

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<sup>84</sup> Or prior to 30 April in *Département* assembly election years.

Article 191 of the 2024 Finance Act requires local authorities with more than 3,500 inhabitants to produce a statement entitled "impact of the budget for ecological transition". It must be appended to the administrative account or the single financial account (CFU) as from the 2024 financial year.

This document must present the investment expenditure which, within the budget, contributes negatively or positively to all or part of France's ecological transition goals under Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council dated 18 June 2020.

The departmental Council's accountant is the "Paymaster" of the *Département*. The independent officer of a Government ministry (the Economics and Finance Ministry), he is responsible for controlling the regularity of revenue and expenditure operations ordered by the authorising officer. He has sole authority for cash transactions (collection and receipt of revenue, payment of expenses) and keeps the general accounts. In this regard, he falls under the jurisdiction of the disputes chamber of the Cour des Comptes.

Today, when the departmental Council votes its administrative account, it simultaneously presents, in a separate report, the (strictly identical) management report prepared by the Paymaster. The draft single financial account, which merges both documents and will be of general application no later than the 2026 financial year (article 242 of the 2019 Finance Act, as amended by article 205 of the 2024 Finance Act), aims to strengthen transparency and reliability.

Expenditure is managed on a multi-year basis through programme authorisations (PA) in the case of the investment section and commitment authorisations (CA) in the case of the operating section.

This mode of management relates to capital expenditure and equipment subsidies paid out, and certain operating expenditure. PA and CA constitute the upper limit for expenditure to be incurred. They remain valid, without time limit, until cancelled. They may be reviewed.

Spending credits (*crédits de paiement*) define the upper limit for expenditure that may be ordered during the year to cover commitments in terms of the related PA or CA.

In order to clarify the general budgetary framework and describe the local authority's internal procedures, the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône has introduced the following:

- budgetary and financial rules, including the principal rules governing the local authority's budgetary and accounting procedures;
- a general financial procedures guide setting forth all of the Département's internal financial, budgetary and accounting rules.

Since 1 January 2020, local authorities' accounting chains are fully dematerialised.

## **4.2 Borrowing**

### **Principles**

Following the law of 2 March 1982 relating to the rights and freedoms of *communes*, *départements* and *régions*, which has abolished any form of State supervision over the acts of local authorities, such authorities henceforth have acquired full and complete discretionary decision-making powers with regard to borrowing.

Accordingly, under the terms of article L. 3336-1 of the CGCT, the Département may now raise borrowings.

## **Borrowing, budgetary source of funds**

Under the terms of article L. 3332-3 of the CGCT, proceeds from borrowing constitute one of the non-fiscal revenues in the capital section of the Département's budget.

Borrowings must be used exclusively to finance capital spending, whether for a specific item of equipment or works relating to such equipment or the acquisition of durable goods treated as fixed assets. Borrowings do not have to be specifically allocated to one or more capital spending items set forth in the contract. They are pooled and remain available for all capital section financing requirements.

Borrowings must under no circumstances be used to make up a deficit in the operating section or a lack of own funds to repay debt (article L. 1612-4 of the CGCT).

Furthermore, unforeseen expenditure entered in the capital section of the budget cannot be financed by borrowings (article L. 3322-1 of the CGCT).

Subject to this restriction, the proceeds of borrowing specified in the primary budget may be used to balance the capital section.

Under the 2024 Finances Act No. 2023-1322 of 29 December 2023 it is henceforth possible to identify the share of debt devoted to investments contributing to ecological transition goals. However, the new political and legislative environment creates a great deal of uncertainty.

## **Budgetary allocation**

The credits necessary for annual debt repayment, in both principal and interest, must be truly and fairly assessed in the budget. Borrowing costs, whether interest or ancillary finance costs, are allocated to Chapter 66 (financial expenses) under operating section expenditure.

Principal repayments, on the other hand, are applied to the Chapter 16 (borrowings and assimilated debts) under capital section expenditure. These must be covered by own funds which constitutes a fundamental condition of budgetary balance (article L.1612-4 of the CGCT).

Debt service constitutes a mandatory expense whether for the redemption of principal or finance costs. The lender is therefore entitled to invoke automatic payment registration and ordering procedures to obtain payment of annual repayments if the local authority is in default (articles L. 1612-15 to L. 1612-17 of the CGCT).

## **The various lenders and types of borrowing available to local authorities**

Freedom of access to borrowing has helped to create a real local authority financing market which has resulted in a diverse array of financiers and products offered to local authorities.

The *Caisse des dépôts et Consignations*, established in 1816, began lending to local authorities in 1821. It is therefore a traditional local authority financier, which now shares the stage with other more recent entities, through the "Banque des Territoires".

Originally, local authorities used fixed-rate loans with regular annual repayments. With the liberalisation of access to the financial markets, they henceforth have the opportunity to make use of almost all existing types of product (variable rate, bonds, risk management...).

The 2008 financial crisis which led to high volatility levels in the indices used in rate calculation formulas for structured products, revealed the true danger of certain types of borrowings.

The signing in 2009 of a code of good conduct between banking establishments and local authorities and the publication of the 25 June 2010 memorandum, aim to bring an end to the commercialisation of risky structured products.

The implementation, under the framework of the code of good conduct, of a classification for structured products (the “Gissler” classification) and the updating of local authority budgetary explanatory notes concerning debt, have significantly increased the awareness of elected officials and citizens on local public financing, in particular in relation to the risks of structured products.

Tapping in to the bond markets has enabled local authorities, essentially *Départements* and *régions*, to access new sources of financing.

A new tool has emerged in recent years, in the form of a dematerialized exchange platform for issuers and investors. Their place remains confidential.

### 4.3 Controls

The French Republic has become structurally decentralised and local authorities are governed autonomously by elected councillors pursuant to articles 1 and 72 of the 4 October 1958 Constitution.

As such and pursuant to article L. 1111-2 of the CGCT, the *Département* governs by its decisions the affairs falling within the scope of its authority.

However, such freedom of administration must be exercised in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing the exercise of such powers. Although the State’s representative no longer exercises any supervisory control, suitability control, *a priori* control over the acts of local authorities, such local authority acts are, however, subject to legality controls.

In budgetary matters, and in parallel with legality controls, local authority acts are subject to specific controls: budgetary control, transactional controls by the public auditor, control by the regional audit office (CRC).

#### (a) Budgetary control by the State’s representative

Pursuant to articles L. 1612-1 to L. 1612-20 of the CGCT, budgetary control is exercised over the primary budget, supplemental budgets and the administrative account. The CRC intervenes in four instances:

- when adoption of the primary budget is overdue (after 15 April, other than in governing Assembly election years, where the time limit is 30 April of the financial year) and, following a 15-day delivery deadline, the *Préfet* must immediately refer the matter to the CRC which formulates proposals within one month; the *Préfet* sets the budget and renders it enforceable. If he diverges from the CRC’s proposals, his decision must be backed up by reasons;
- if the adopted budget is not properly balanced (revenue does not match expenditure), three successive time periods follow: 30 days for the *Préfet* to refer the matter to the CRC; 30 days for the CRC to formulate its proposals; one month for the governing assembly of the local authority to remedy the situation, failing which the *Préfet* will himself go ahead and set the budget or provide express reasons for his decision if he diverges from the CRC’s proposals;
- if a mandatory expense item is omitted from the budget, the CRC, to which the matter may be referred either by the *Préfet*, the public auditor or any other interested party, sends a formal demand notice to the relevant local authority; if within a period of one month such formal notice has not been satisfactorily answered, the CRC requests the *Préfet* to enter such expense

item in the budget and, if necessary, proposes that funds be raised or an optional expenditure item be decreased to cover the mandatory expense; the *Préfet* sets the budget and renders it enforceable. If he diverges from the CRC's proposals, his decision must be backed up by reasons;

- where execution of the budget is in deficit (where the sum of the results of the two sections of the administrative account is negative) by more than 5% or 10% of operating section revenue, depending on the size of the local authority, the CRC proposes restorative measures within a period of one month from the date of referral by the *Préfet*. Furthermore, it validates the primary budget for the following financial year and, if it determines that the local authority has not taken sufficient action, it proposes the necessary measures to the *Préfet* within a period of one month. The *Préfet* sets the budget and renders it enforceable. If he diverges from the CRC's proposals, his decision must be backed up by reasons.

The 2023-2027 public finance programming law and the 2024 Finance Act require local authorities to contribute to repairing the public finances, via in particular regulating increases in operating expenditure. Implementation arrangements have yet to be defined against a background of legislative uncertainty.

**(b) Control by the public auditor**

In public accounts, separation of the authorising officer and the auditor derives from the principle of specialisation and separation of responsibilities. Each of them has a specifically defined role as set forth in the *décret* of 7 November 2012 as referred to above relating to budgetary and public accounts management.

As a reminder, this *décret* consolidates and updates the body of laws and regulations relating to budgetary and public accounts management including the *décret* no. 62-1587 of 29 December 1962 containing the general regulations on public accounts.

This principle of separation between authorising officers and auditors and the incompatibility between the two functions that flows from this, means that public auditors are bestowed with exclusive powers and responsibilities.

Accordingly, articles 18 to 20 of the *décret* of 7 November 2012 set forth the controls that the public auditor must carry out with respect to the expenditure and revenue falling within his remit, namely:

- collection orders (regularity of issue of demand and implementation of enforcement and collection measures);
- payment orders (authority of signatory, proof of services provided and production of evidence, control of correct budgetary and accounting application ...);
- validity of the debt;
- correctness of account keeping;
- custody of funds and securities belonging to or entrusted to public bodies;
- handling of funds and cash account transactions;
- safe-keeping of transactional documentary evidence and accounting documents.

The role of the public auditor guarantees the regularity and sincerity of public authority accounts. He controls the transactions originated by the authorising officer with reference to budgetary and accounting rules and regulations. The public auditor does not judge the suitability or legality of budgetary decisions.

Pursuant to order n°2022-408 dated 22 March 2022, on the financial responsibility regime applicable to public accounts managers, a unified jurisdictional regime applies to these public managers since the 1st January 2023.

(c) **Control by the regional audit office (*Chambre régionale des comptes or CRC*)**

The law of 2 March 1982 concerning the rights and freedoms of *communes, départements* and *régions* established CRC, staffed by magistrates appointed for life.

The powers and authority of these jurisdictions are prescribed by law and have been codified under articles L.211-1 et seq. of the French financial jurisdictions Code.

They principally exercise three areas of authority over local authorities and their public entities (i) jurisdictional power with respect to public auditors' accounts, (ii) budgetary control (iii) management control. Their role is also to evaluate public policy and the implementation of such policy at local level by contributing to thematic enquiries.

**Budgetary control**

Pursuant to article L. 232-1 of the financial jurisdictions Code, the CRC intervenes in the following cases:

- budget not adopted within legal time limits,
- adopted budget not balanced,
- administrative account in deficit,
- insufficient credits necessary for payment of a mandatory expense item,
- rejection of the administrative account.

**Jurisdictional control over public auditor accounts**

The primary mission of the CRC, it is obliged to control the regularity of public auditors' accounts of local authorities and their public entities.

For such purpose, it verifies the accounts and documentary evidence presented, by document and by location, and examines whether the accounts are balanced. If the accounts have been correctly prepared, the CRC issues an order discharging the public auditor.

Conversely, it places him in “debit” if revenue has not been recovered or if expenditure has been improperly paid for. Indeed, the public auditor can be personally and financially liable for the performance of his mission. In this regard, he is liable on his personal assets for errors committed in the performance of his mission, either by himself or by his dedicated team: cash deficit, non-collection of revenue, payment not in discharge of expenditure, notably.

Such control also extends to any person acting illegally in the management of public funds. The *de facto* accountant is therefore also subject to the same obligations and liabilities as a public auditor.

## **Management control**

The purpose of these controls is to examine the regularity and quality of a local authority's management. It examines not only the financial equilibrium of management activity and the resources employed for its implementation, but also the outcome achieved compared to the resources employed and the results of the actions undertaken.

Basing their judgement on the regularity of the activity and the economics of the resources employed and not on the appropriateness or suitability of the actions undertaken by local authorities, the *CRC*'s first priority is to encourage and assist local authorities in complying with the law in order to avoid any penalties.

### **(d) Civil servant liability**

The law no. 83-634 of 13 July 1983, which forms chapter I concerning the general status of civil servants and applies to three public functions (state, local authority and hospitals), provides in article 29: *“any civil servant who commits a breach in the exercise or in connection with the performance of his/her functions shall be liable to disciplinary measures without prejudice, if applicable, to any criminal penalties imposed by law”*.

Furthermore, there are faults which constitute breaches of specific obligations defined in specific laws and which are distinct from disciplinary breaches. These include, for example, offences punishable by the financial and budgetary discipline committee (*cour de discipline budgétaire et financière*). The list of offences is set forth in articles L. 313-1 et seq. of the financial jurisdictions Code. Their purpose is to sanction breaches by the State and local authorities of revenue and expenditure execution rules.

Furthermore, the *CRC* may hold a public servant liable for *de facto* management. This is an irregularity which involves failing to observe the principle of separation of authorising officer and accountant by involving oneself in the unauthorised handling or holding of public funds.

Law No. 2016-483 of 20 April 2016 on ethics and the rights and obligations of civil servants clarified the rights and obligations of civil servants. In particular, it provides measures to prevent conflicts of interest (for example, the making of formal statements) and to protect whistle-blowers.

The law n°2022-401 of 21 March 2022 on improving the protections for whistle-blowers introduces a new whistle-blower protection regime, applying in particular to the civil service.

For its part, the Département has established a risks management and compliance unit. Reporting to the legal, risk control and audit department, it is responsible for drawing up and overseeing the programme for the prevention of breaches of ethical conduct (establishing an anti-corruption framework, instilling a culture of transparency and ethical behaviour, deploying an internal control and ethical risks management mechanism). A code of conduct has been formalised and circulated, for the attention of both elected officials and officers.

Both of these recall the ethical principles to be respected (integrity and probity, duty of confidentiality, professional discretion, personal data privacy...), avoiding risky behaviour and situations (conflicts of interest, cumulative activities, revolving doors, management and use of the Département's assets and resources...) and the role of each.

(e) **Informing the local population**

The law No. 2015-991 of 7 August, known as the NOTRe law, reinforced existing obligations in terms of informing the population about local authorities' budgets and accounts.

In particular, it provides that there should be a brief and concise presentation of essential financial information attached to the primary budget (**PB**) and the administrative accounts (**AA**), and that documents should be made available online (including the aforementioned presentation, report on budgetary guidelines, PB and AA) to improve citizens' information and enable them to make informed choices when voting.

These measures complement those already in force (publication of ratios and external financial commitments of the local authority under Law No. 92-125 of 6 February 1995, known as the ATR Act, list of associations that have received a subsidy or other assistance under Law 2006-586 of 23 May 2006 and the corresponding decree).

(f) **Rating**

The Issuer has been attributed a rating from the rating agency Fitch Ratings Ireland Limited ("**Fitch**").

The analysis performed relates to its political, institutional and economic background and on developments in its financial situation. It is carried out during the course of two annual reviews. The first long-term rating was obtained by the Issuer on 10 October 2013.

Following its ratings review of 31 May 2024, Fitch confirmed the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône's "AA-" long-term issuer default rating, with however a change from "stable" to "negative" outlook, and confirmed its "F1+" short-term IDR rating.

The press release issued on 31 May 2024 specifies that: "*Fitch Ratings has revised the outlook on Bouches-du-Rhone's long-term foreign and local-currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs) to negative from stable and affirmed the IDRs at "AA-". A full list of rating actions is below.*

*The revision of the outlook to negative reflects that the debt payback ratio is now above 9x by 2028 in our rating case. This is a result of lower projected property transfer duties (DMTO) following a decline in 2023 and an expected increase in social spending. The final IDRs are at the same level as the département's 'aa-' Standalone Credit Profile (SCP)."*

**MAIN RATING FACTORS**

***A High-Midrange risk profile***

*Key rating factors are assessed as either "high" or "midrange". The resulting high-midrange risk profile reflects the low likelihood that the département's ability to cover its debt service with its operating balance will weaken unexpectedly in our (2024-2028) rating scenario, either because of lower-than-expected revenue, or because of an unanticipated increase in expenditure or debt service requirements.*

***Revenue robustness: factor assessed as "strong"***

*The département benefits from robust revenue. They include predictable tax revenues with high growth potential, including the special tax on insurance contracts (11% of management revenues in 2023) and VAT (23%). VAT is linked to consumption at national level and Fitch considers the risk of a sustained decline in this revenue as low.*



*The Département also collects stable funding transferred by the State, including transfers (28%) and the domestic consumption tax on energy products, TIPCE (14%), whose revenues are mainly guaranteed by the State. The counterparty risk of these revenues is low due to the high rating of the French State (AA-/Stable).*

*The main source of volatility is transfer fees (DMTO, 19%) that are related to real estate transactions in the area which we take into account in the assumptions of our rating scenario. In 2023, they fell by 22% due to a lower number of transactions and lower real estate prices, driven by high mortgage rates.*

**Revenue adjustability: assessed as “Midrange”**

*Fitch considers that the départements benefit from schemes for a partial covering of costs by the French government: it is responsible for public policies decided at national level, especially social expenditure, and they tend to receive greater financial support from the State when costs increase. Fitch expects the French state to continue supporting the départements if they face a sustained increase in social spending.*

*Historically support mechanisms from the French state were not sufficient to cover increases in spending in the past and do not benefit from a constitutional guarantee. Therefore, the rating is not assessed as "strong", but 'midrange'.*

**Expenditure Sustainability: “Midrange”**

*Like other French départements, a major share of the Bouches-du-Rhône’s operating expenditure is represented by social expenditure of which the evolution depends on measures decided at national level, which limits the département’s ability to control its expenditure. These include active solidarity revenue benefits (RSA, 20% of operating expenditure in 2023) which are contra-cyclical expenditure items and tend to increase when unemployment increases.*

*However, the Département has exercised good control over its operating expenditure in recent years, with operating revenue growing faster than operating expenditure (3% vs. 2.7% on average in 2017-2022). We consider 2023 as exceptional.*

**Expenditure Adjustability: “Midrange”**

*The département’s expenditure adjustability is limited. This includes mandatory transfers, including spending on social benefits (35% of operating expenditure in 2023 including RSA), and also accommodation costs (24%). Payroll costs (19%) are also a source of budget rigidity because most of its staff have civil servant status.*

*The département has more flexibility over its capital expenditure (17% of total spending in 2023 versus an average for French départements of around 15%). This capital spending flexibility is however reduced by the département’s high investment needs, in particular in transportation. We estimate the inflexible share at between 70% and 90% of total spending.*

**Liabilities and Liquidity Robustness: “Strong”**

*At end-2023, the département’s debt was low risk: 55% of the département’s debt was fixed rate, and 100% was categorized as IA under the Gissler Charter. Debt service is structurally well covered by the operating balance (2023: 1.9x). The depreciation profile is relatively smooth with repayments of €116 million on average over the period 2024-2028.*

*The département's off-balance sheet liabilities are sizeable, representing 5.9x the operating balance in 2023. However, 93% was related to entities in the social housing sector considered as low risk, notably '13 Habitat' (53% of the total).*

### ***Liabilities and liquidity flexibility: "Strong"***

*Fitch views the framework for emergency liquidity support from the French state as strong. Local authorities' liquidity is deposited with the Trésor and is pooled with that of the French State. The French State can transfer cash advances to local authorities, several months ahead of schedule. The counterparty risk of this mechanism is low due to the high sovereign rating. The département also has good access to liquidity in different forms, including 105 million euros of credit lines at end of 2023 with banks rated in the 'A' category. As with other French local authorities, the département may have access to institutional lenders, such as Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (AA/Stable) which may provide support in case of problems accessing market financing.*

### ***Debt sustainability ratios: 'aa' category***

*In our rating scenario, the Département's deleveraging capacity should exceed 9x by 2028 (2023:7.5x), the debt service coverage (Fitch synthetic calculation) is close to 1.3x by 2028 and the debt ratio will be close to 90% by 2028.*

*The operating balance declined 40% in 2023, to 252 million euros, driven by a 22% decrease in property transfer duties (DMTO), a 6% increase in personnel costs and general overheads, as well as higher social spending.*

*In our rating case, we expect the operating balance to increase to close to 270 M€ by 2028 from 252 M€ in 2023. This reflects our assumption of stable property transfer duties (DMTO) in 2024 and a progressive rebound from 2025 as well as dynamic VAT proceeds, weighed down by a sustained increase in social spending, most notably social subsidies for the disabled (PCH, 4% on average in 2024-2028) and personnel costs (2.5%). We expect net adjusted debt to rise to close to 2.6 Bn€ by end of 2028 from 1.9 Bn€ at end-2023, as we forecast the self-financing capacity (current balance + capital revenue / capital expenditure) to average close to 70% in 2024-2028.*

## ***RATING SUMMARY***

*The Département des Bouches-du-Rhône's SCP is 'aa-', driven by a 'High Midrange' risk profile and debt sustainability that Fitch assesses at the lower end of the 'aa' category under Fitch's rating case.*

*The Bouches-du-Rhône's final IDR is not capped by the French State's and no other factors affect the final ratings.*

## ***DEBT INSTRUMENT RATINGS***

*The Département's senior unsecured long term bonds ratings are at the same level as its final long term rating. The Département's senior unsecured short term bonds ratings are at the same level as its final short term rating.*

## ***KEY ASSUMPTIONS***

*Qualitative assumptions and their assessment:*

*Risk profile: High Midrange, unchanged with low weight*

*Revenue Robustness: Stronger, unchanged with low weight*

*Revenue Adjustability: Midrange, unchanged with low weight*

*Expenditure Sustainability: Midrange, unchanged with low weight*

*Expenditure Adjustability: Midrange, unchanged with low weight*  
*Liabilities and Liquidity Robustness: Stronger, unchanged with low weight*  
*Liabilities and Liquidity Flexibility: Stronger, unchanged with low weight*  
*Debt sustainability: 'aa' category, deteriorated with high weight*  
*Inter-governmental debt: n/a, unchanged with low weight*  
*Ad hoc support: n/a, unchanged with low weight*  
*Asymmetric Risks: n/a, unchanged with low weight*  
*Sovereign Floor: n/a, unchanged with low weight*  
*Sovereign ceiling on long-term IDR rating in foreign currencies: n/a, unchanged with low weight*  
*Sovereign ceiling on long-term IDR rating in local currency: n/a, unchanged with low weight*

***Quantitative assumptions - issuer specific:***

*Fitch's rating case scenario is a "through-the-cycle" scenario, which is based on the 2019-2023 figures and 2024-2028 projected ratios. The key assumptions are as follows:*

- an average annual increase in operating revenue of 2%, mostly driven by a gradual recovery in property transfer duties from 2025 onwards and dynamic VAT proceeds, with high weight;*
- an annual average growth in operating expenditure of 2.1%, driven by a sustained increase in social spending, notably social subsidies to the disabled (PCH), as well as personnel costs, with high weight;*
- a net capital balance of close to -335 million euros on average, with capital expenditure that has been revised down to account for the fall in DMTO, with high weight;*
- an apparent cost of debt of 2.4%, factoring in the département's high share of fixed-rate debt (55% at end-2023) and a fixed 3.4% average rate on new borrowings from 2024, with low weight.*

***Quantitative assumptions - sovereign related (no weights are assigned as none of these assumptions was material to the rating action)***

***Figures for the Département as per Fitch's sovereign rating for France: actuals for 2023 and forecast for 2024 respectively (no weights are assigned as none of these assumptions was material to the rating action):***

*GDP per capita (US dollar, market exchange rate): 46,146; 47,595*

*Real GDP growth (%): 0.7; 0.82*

*Consumer prices (annual average% change): 5.66; 2.73*

*General government balance (% of GDP): -5.46; -5.12*

*General government debt (% of GDP): 110.63; 112.56*

*Current account balance plus net FDI (% of GDP): -2.26; -0.03*

*Net external debt (% of GDP): 43.89; 42.99*

*IMF Development Classification: Developed Market*

*CDS Market Implied Rating: 'AA-'*

***RATING SENSITIVITIES***

*Factors that could, individually or collectively, lead to negative rating action/downgrade:*

*A deterioration of the payback ratio to above 9x on a sustained basis in our rating-case scenario could lead to a downgrade. A downgrade of sovereign ratings would also lead to a downgrade of Département ratings.*

*Factors that could, individually or collectively, lead to positive rating action/upgrade:*

*A revision of the outlook to stable could be triggered by the payback ratio remaining below 9x on a sustained basis in our rating scenario.*

#### **MAIN FINANCIAL ADJUSTMENTS**

*Fitch consolidates the département's accounts with those of the fire brigade (SDIS), the latter being financed mainly through a transfer from the département through the operating and investment sections (87.3 million euros in 2023).*

#### **ESG CONSIDERATIONS**

*ESG factors have a very low impact on the département's credit quality, which is reflected in its score of 3."*

#### **ISSUER PROFILE**

*The Bouches-du-Rhône is a French département located in the south of the country, with a population of around 2 million inhabitants. Its capital city is Marseille (AA-/Stable). Its principal powers are social spending, secondary schools and departmental roads maintenance.*

#### **INFORMATION SOURCES**

*Date of the rating committee meeting: 28 May 2024*

*A committee with an appropriate quorum met and the committee members confirmed that their appointments were not being challenged. The data was considered sufficiently robust for analysis. During the committee meeting, no material difficulties were identified that were not raised in the committee's presentation document. The main rating factors of the corresponding methodology were discussed by the committee members. The decision on the ratings explained in this press release reflects the decision of the Committee."*

## 5. THE 2023 ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT

There is currently no requirement for the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône's accounts to be certified by statutory auditors. They are approved by the departmental Council by 30 June at the latest in the administrative accounts (AA) which reproduces all expenditure and revenue relating to the relevant financial year. This account must comply with the management accounts prepared by the public auditor who is responsible for making payments in respect of expenditure and collecting in the Département's revenue.

In 2027, it will be mandatory for all local authorities to present a single financial account (CFU). This will merge the two present documents out of concern for accounting security, transparency and simplification.

Article 191 of the 2024 Finance Act requires local authorities to produce a statement entitled "impact of the budget for ecological transition". It must be appended to the administrative account or the single financial account (CFU) as from the 2024 financial year. The implementing decree for this measure was published on 16 July 2024.

### 5.1 Presentation and analysis of the 2023 AA.

The Département's administrative account (AA) for the 2023 financial year was approved by the departmental Council at its public meeting held on 28 June 2024, in conformity with the management accounts of the paymaster of the Département.

The Département maintains five distinct accounts. Indeed, the law requires that certain activities be treated separately from the Département's general missions (social care facilities, CMPPD<sup>85</sup>, DIMEF<sup>86</sup>; industrial and commercial services with special tax regimes, as the ports, scientific services):

- the general budget (GB)<sup>87</sup>;
- the ancillary CMPPD budget (support for families and children in difficulty);
- the ancillary DIMEF budget (child care structures);
- the ancillary ports budget<sup>88</sup> (development and management of 7 predominantly commercial and fishing maritime ports);
- the ancillary departmental analysis laboratories (LDA) budget<sup>89</sup> (human, animal and vegetal health and welfare).

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<sup>85</sup> Departmental medico-psycho-pedagogical centre (Instruction M22).

<sup>86</sup> Departmental family and children's welcome centre (Instruction M22).

<sup>87</sup> Budgetary and accounting instruction M52.

<sup>88</sup> Instruction M4.

<sup>89</sup> Département's analysis laboratory (instruction M52).

### **Breakdown of expenditure and activity (AA 2023) – actual credits / in M€**

<b>Budgets</b>	<b>Operating</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Comments</b>
General budget	2 433	471	2 904	98.7%	
CMPPD	2.7	0	2.7	0.09%	Objectives contractualised in a CPOM
DIMEF	26	0.3	26.3	0.89%	funded by global endowment (source general budget)
Ports	0.7	1	1.7	0.06%	Financed by ports levy and general budget endowment
LDA	7.7	0.7	8.4	0.29%	Invoicing services and GB allowances (public service missions)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 470.1</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>2 943.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

General budget, operating: actual operating expenditure.

General budget, capital: expenditure excluding debt

The figures below do not take into account the ancillary budgets due to their relative financial insignificance compared to the general budget.

### **Simplified balance sheet as at 31 December (management account) – in M€**

Intangible fixed assets	2 893	<b>TOTAL OWN FUNDS</b>	<b>7 349</b>
Tangible fixed assets	6 339	<b>PROVISION FOR RISK AND EXPENSES</b>	<b>16</b>
Financial fixed assets	23	Long-term financial debt	1 944
<b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS</b>	<b>9 255</b>	Short-term debt	61
<b>TOTAL CIRCULATING ASSETS</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>TOTAL DEBT</b>	<b>2 005</b>
Prepayment and accrued income	16	Accruals and deferred income	10
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>9 380</b>	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>9 380</b>

### **Overview**

Actual and mixed expenditure in the 2023 AA was 2,996 M€ (including debt), with 3,253 M€ in revenue. The 2023 AA closed with a cumulative surplus of 7.6 M€ (59.2 M€ in 2022).

Unrealised items for the 2023 financial year amount to 11.8 M€ for expenditure. These are split as follows: 8.1 M€ for operating expenditure (general expenditure, ordinary management expenditure and RSA) and 3.7 M€ for capital expenditure (equipment subsidies and tangible, intangible and current fixed assets).

Under revenue, two European Investment Bank (EIB) loans, in amounts of 25 and 18 M€ respectively are yet to be collected. The 18 M€ funds for the financing of the Cité Scolaire Internationale were released on 18 March 2024, and payment of the 25 M€ balance towards the “covid/battle against climate change” contract will be arranged at the end of the 2024 financial year.

### Operating section – in M€

Expenditure				Revenue			
Item	2022	2023	Change	Item	2022	2023	Change
Staff costs	408.1	432.1	+5.9%	Direct taxation	236	106	- 55.1%
Other expenditure	1658.7	1 706.2	+2.9%	Indirect taxation	1727,8	1 760	+1.9%
Transfer payments	77.6	76.6	- 1.3%	Endowments and contributions	590.4	600.5	+1.7%
External services (61)	47.4	47.4	+2.1%	Others (collections, provisions)	184.4	179.9	- 2.4%
Other external services (62)	81.5	79.1	- 3%				
Provisions	9.4	14.1	+49.1%				
Finance costs	18.1	35	+93.8%				
Others (60 ; others actual 63 and 67)	33.6	42.4	+26.3%				
Balancing (d'ordre) expenditure (endowments and 67) Balancing (d'ordre) revenue	322.1	359.4	+10.7%	Balancing revenues (77)	211.9	198.9	- 6.1%
Investment section financing	306.3	102.2	- 66.6%				
Closing result	59.2	7.6	- 87.2%	Surplus carried forward	72.7	56	- 23%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3023.4</b>	<b>2 901.7</b>	<b>- 4%</b>		<b>3023.4</b>	<b>2 901.7</b>	<b>- 4%</b>

### Capital section – in M€

Expenditure				Revenue			
Item	2022	2023	Change	Item	2022	2023	Change
Equipment subsidies	328.5	261.9	-20.3%	Actual revenues	47.9	54.7	14.5%
Intangible fixed assets (20)	32.1	38.1	18.7%	Capitalised operating surplus	289.9	309.8	6.9%
Tangible fixed assets (21)	95	37.7	-60.3%				
Current fixed assets (23)	128.9	113.9	-11.7%				
Other fixed assets, advances and interim payments (238)	12.3	15.9	29.5%				

Others (10, 13, 26, 27, 45)	0.2	3.3	-				
Borrowings and equivalent debt	95	92.9	-2.3%	Borrowings and equivalent debt	218.2	242.2	11%
Balancing ( <i>d'ordre</i> ) expenditure	226.3	229.6	1.5%	Balancing ( <i>d'ordre</i> ) revenue (amortisation and others 16,19, 20, 21, 23)	339.1	390.1	15%
Unrealised items	3.5	3.7	6.3%	Unrealised items	0	43	-
Balance of execution of capital section carried forward	283.1	305.7	8%	Financing of capital section	309.8	62.9	-79.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 204.9</b>	<b>1 102.7</b>	<b>-8.5%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 204.9</b>	<b>1 204.9</b>	<b>-8.5%</b>

The expenditure realisation rate, excluding debt and retained income in the operating section was 98% in 2023 (compared to 96% in 2022) and the rate for revenue was 96% compared to 102% in 2022.

In terms of expenditure, this figure is explained by the to-the-nearest-penny forecast in an environment doubly constrained by the fall in revenue and increase in expenditure. As for revenue, estimates are made cautiously at the beginning of the year. The fall in DMTO was however much sharper than anticipated. Monitoring VAT is complex due to the adjustments required to be made a posteriori, and sometimes on a staggered financial year basis, making it tricky to accurately assess changes in this revenue.

In the capital section, the realisation rate for expenditure (excluding debt), regularisations (budgetary entries) and retained income, was 88% as in 2022. Revenues are assessed as accurately as possible, at a rate of 97%.

in K€	Operating				Capital			
	Expenditure		Revenue		Expenditure		Revenue	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Forecast	2 422 836	2 487 040	2 693 172	2 746 119	678 435	532 858	50 758	56 462
Realised	2 333 141	2 432 521	2 738 809	2 646 772	597 023	470 766	47 934	54 715
<b>Realisation rate</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>97%</b>

NB: actual credits– excluding extraordinary adjustments, debt capital and deferred earnings. For capital expenditure, budgetary regularisation entries are included.

### Capital financing capacity and requirement

In 2023, total capital spending requiring financing, excluding debt, was 470.8 M€.

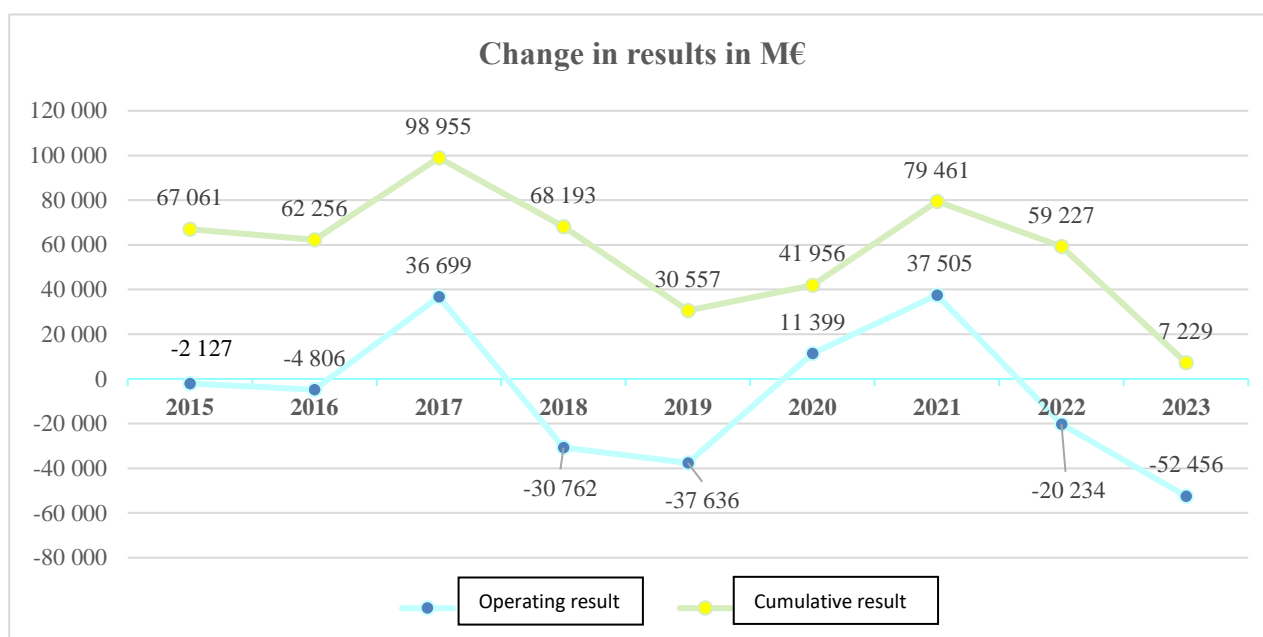
They were financed by borrowing in an amount of 242.2 M€ (51%), a net surplus of 121.4 M€ (26%), definitive capital income of 54.7 M€ (12%) and the local authority's working capital fund (52.5 M€). The use of borrowing is consistent with the fall in the net operating surplus. In line with the drop in DMTO revenue, and continuing social spending, the operating surplus of the départements has fallen by more than 54% in 2023<sup>90</sup>.

<sup>90</sup> Source : OFGPL report, June 2024



### Change in operating result and cumulative result

Over the period 2015-2017, the Département's cumulative result remained relatively stable, at around 64 M€, peaking in relative terms in 2017 (99 M€). The 2023 financial year ends with a final result of 7 M€, the working capital fund having been mobilised to finance investment in 2023.



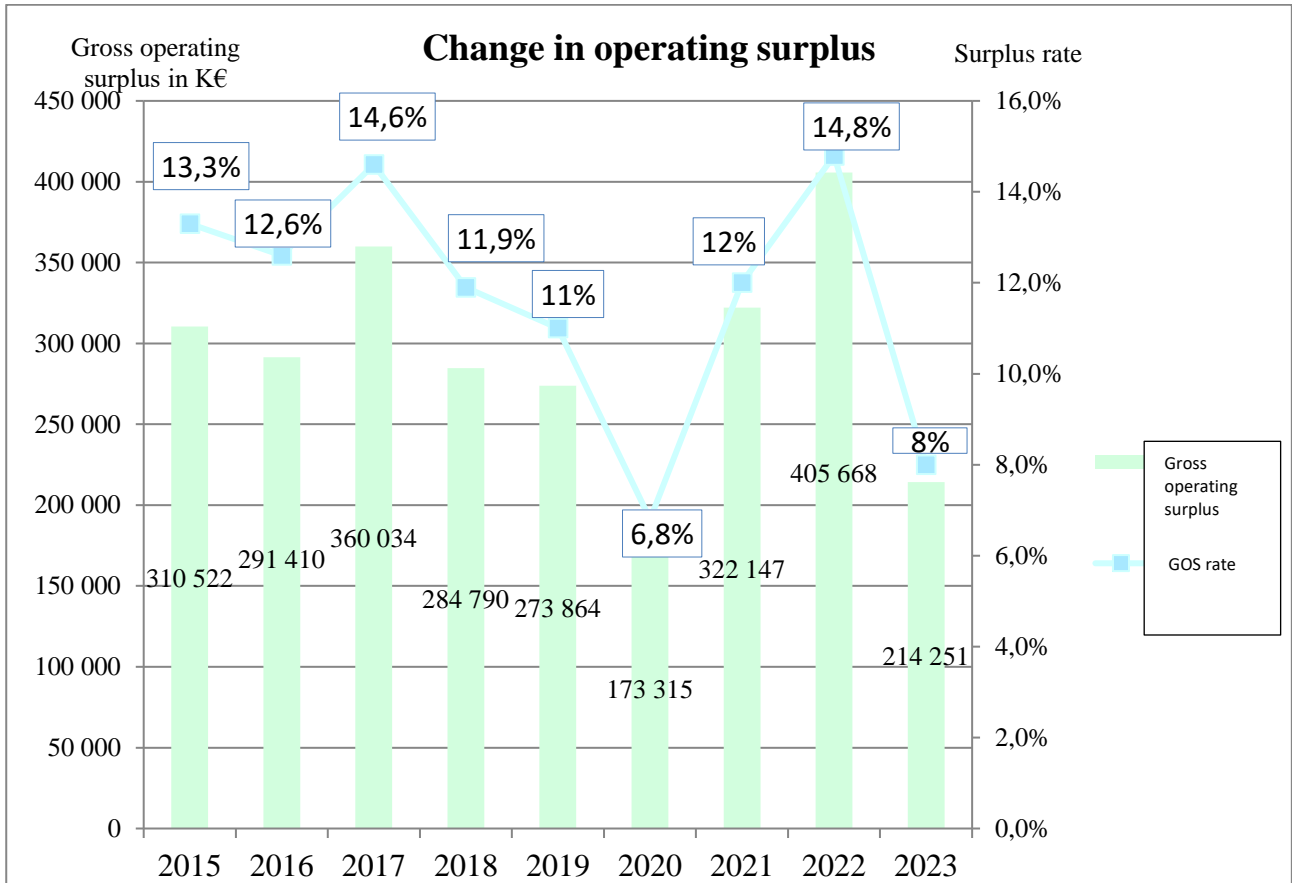
### Change in operating surplus and debt repayment capacity

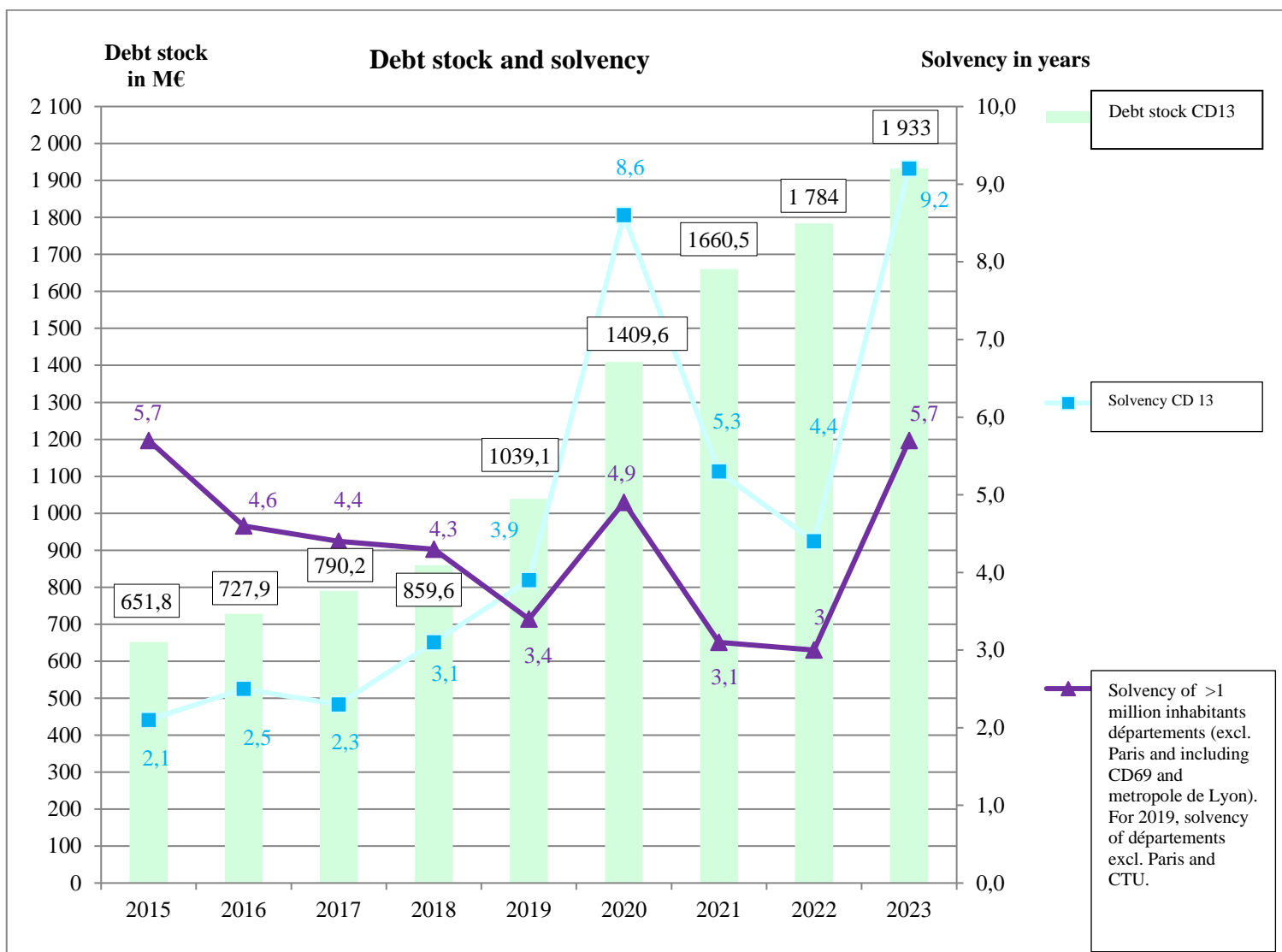
“Gross operating surplus” refers to the positive difference generated in the operating section between expenditure and revenue. This balance enables the Département to finance its capital spending policy.

Gross savings on turnover amounted to 214.3 M€ (405.7 M€ in 2022).

Out of concern for accuracy and transparency, it is refined and restated to neutralize asset disposals (5.1 M€ in 2023). In 2023, adjusted gross operating surplus totalled 209.2 M€ compared to 403.5 M€ in 2021.

The gross operating surplus rate expresses the ratio of gross operating surplus to actual operating revenue. It fell from 14.8% in 2022 to 8% in 2023.





At 31 December 2023, outstanding debt totalled 1,933.1 M€, or €933 per inhabitant, against the average for million plus inhabitant départements of €520<sup>91</sup>.

The indebtedness rate is 73% and the solvency ratio 9.2 years, compared to the national averages of 48.7% for million plus inhabitant départements and 4.2 years for the départements, excluding Paris, Métropole de Lyon and CTU (source : OFGPL report, June 2024). For the million plus inhabitant départements, the average solvency was 5.7 years compared to 3 years in 2022, which is almost double (source : DGFIP).

These findings are related to the deterioration in the financial situation of the départements in 2023. According to the report of the OFGPL (*Observatoire des finances et de la gestion publique locales*) of June 2024, in 2022, only one département had a debt repayment profile of over 8 years. In 2023, there are 11 départements in this position.

<sup>91</sup> Source : OFGPL report, June 2024

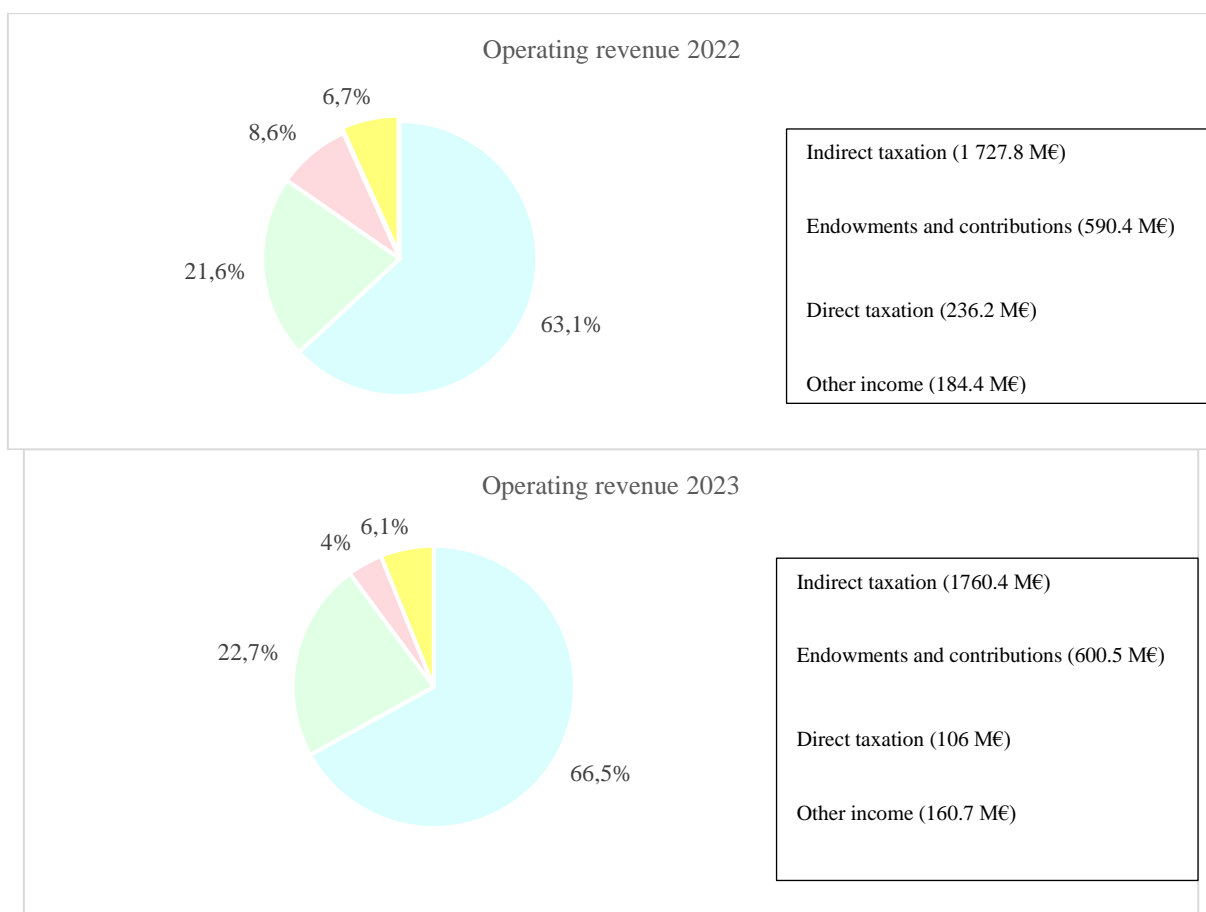
## A. THE OPERATING SECTION

### CHANGES IN OPERATING INCOME

Operating income has fallen by 3.4%, from 2,739 M€ in 2022 to 2,647 M€ in 2023. After adjustment for disposal proceeds and provisions, the fall is 3.1%.

Four points should be noted, as detailed below:

- confirmation of the structural change in the composition of revenue, with a now predominant weighting of indirect taxation, and in particular two items that are sensitive to prevailing economic circumstances, DMTO and VAT. Except for the share paid out by the Région related to the transfer of transport powers in 2017, CVAE has completely disappeared,
- confirmation of the robustness of TSCA (+6.5%),
- relatively dynamic revenue from the State, through the Ségur plan (31.7 M€), with however an implied increased burden in terms of social spending,
- a recorded drop shared by all départements (-1.2% on average according to the OFGPL report of June 2024). Of the 44 départements whose revenues fell, half saw a decline of more than 2.5%.

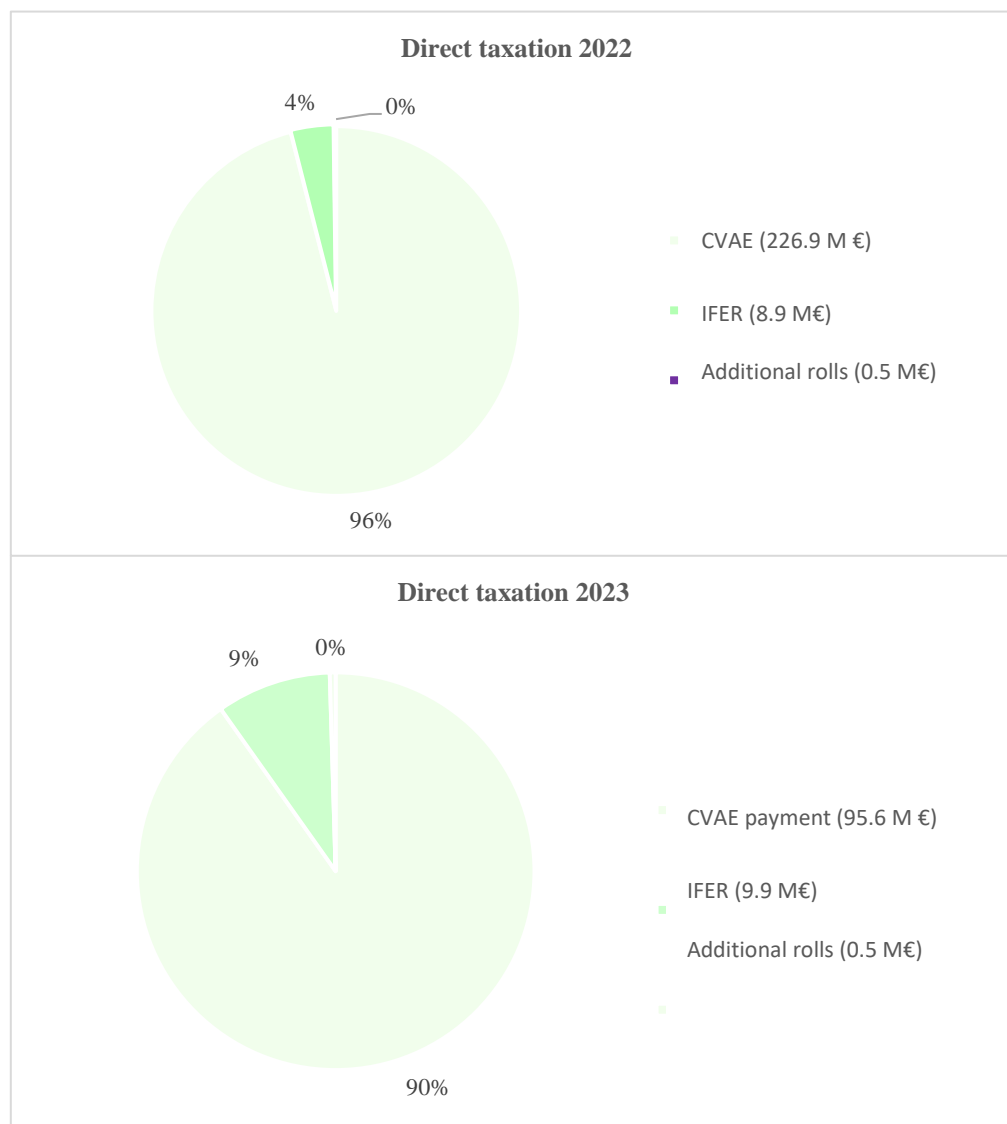


**Direct taxation: 106 M€ (-55.1%)**

Tax revenues confirm their structural change, with the disappearance of CVAE, replaced by a new portion of national VAT. This transfer completes the process ongoing since 2021, following the transfer of the property tax on built properties (TFPB) to the municipalities block.

IFER has increased to 9.9 M€ (+11.5%).

The amount of the Région's CVAE refund is fixed, pursuant to the transport powers transfer agreement entered into in 2017 (95.6 M€).



NB: excluding FNGIR management fees.

**Indirect taxation: 1,760.4 M€ (+1.9%)**

Indirect taxation confirms its essential evolution, in terms of volume (two-thirds of the Département's operating revenues), of composition (VAT is the largest item ahead of DMTO) and of dynamics, both upwards and downwards.

DMTO suffered heavy financial losses due to the decline in the real estate market, at 478.6 M€ and a 22% decrease, consistent with the average change for the départements (also -22%). The fall in the

number of transactions (rise in interest rates) and the fall in prices have led to a drop in this revenue. The total loss for the départements amounts to 11.4 Bn€ and 94 départements saw their DMTO revenue decline in 2023.

The amount of VAT allocated as compensation for TFPB and CVAE varies depending on national VAT revenue with, however, a floor. Revenue of 596.7 M€ was collected, of which 144.3 M€ in respect of CVAE and 456.5 M€ in respect of TFPB. However, this revenue is difficult to monitor and forecast due to its calculation method, which requires various adjustments to be made a posteriori, or indeed staggered over financial years. Thus, in 2023, an adjustment of 4.1 M€ related to 2022 reduced the final revenue amount.

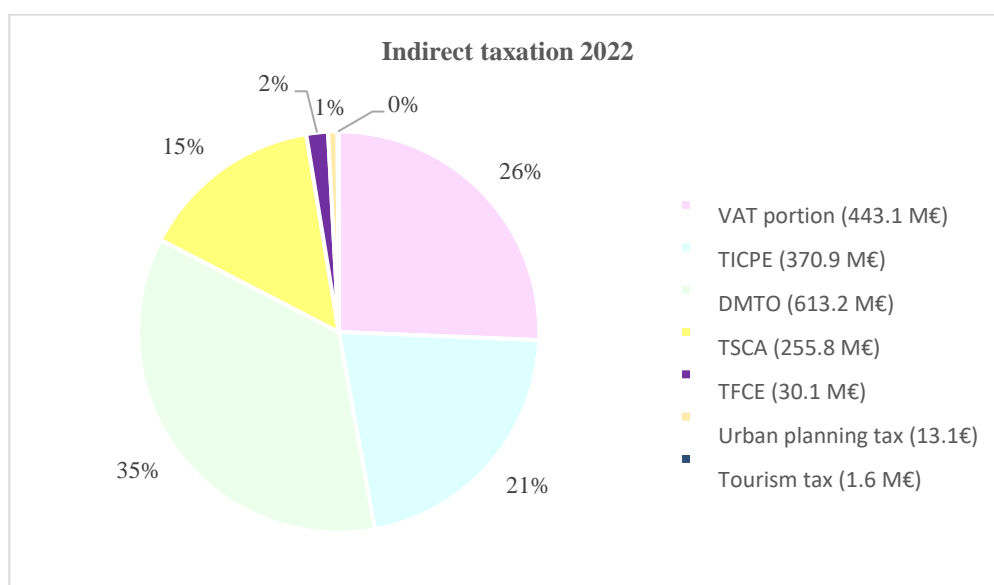
The domestic tax on consumption of energy products (TICPE) is more or less stable at 370.6 M€ and the development tax has increased slightly to 14.6 M€ (+11.4%).

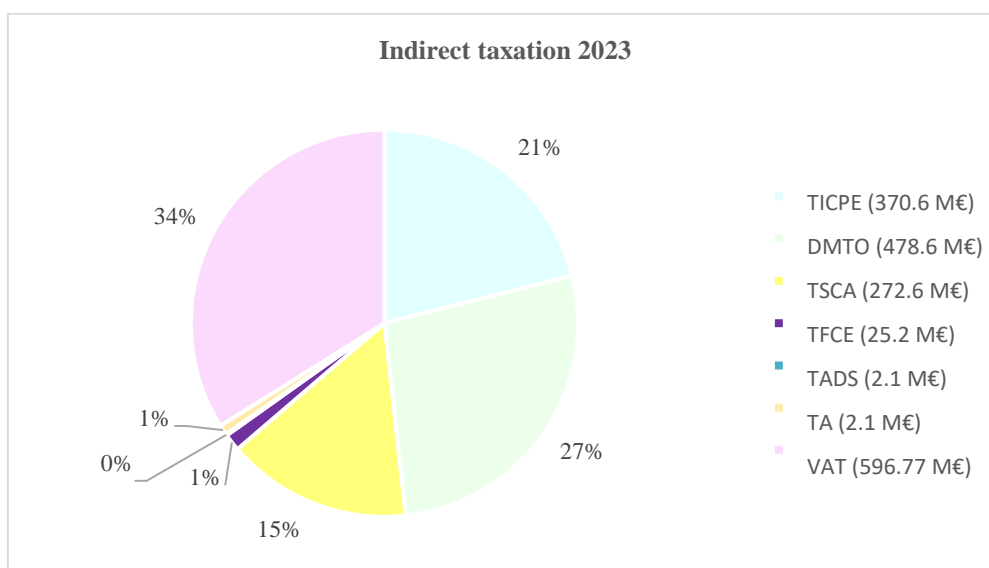
The special tax on insurance contracts (TSCA) confirms its dynamics at 272.6 M€ and +6.5%. The departmental end-user electricity consumption tax (TDCFE) has fallen at 25.2 M€ (-16.1%), however it is an irregular revenue (+32% in 2022) and it is too early to assess the impact of the numerous local electricity generation projects.

The additional tourist tax has attained cruising speed at 2.1 M€ with regular monitoring carried out with Bouches-du-Rhône Tourism in order to ensure the proper collection of this revenue.

In the end, indirect tax revenues are mainly distributed between the three DMTO/VAT/TICPE blocks, with TSCA occupying a significant share (15%) and whose dynamism, difficult to explain, is nevertheless to be highlighted (+5%/year in 2021, 2022 and +6.5% in 2023).

In respect of all direct and indirect tax revenues as a whole, the Département repaid 60.1 M€ via a rebalancing payment, almost all of which is destined for the fund assessed on DMTO. An amount of 16.5 M€ was allocated to it against a levy of 76.6 M€.





NB: excluding allocation to the DMTO equalisation fund.

**Support from the state and the national autonomy solidarity fund (*Caisse Nationale de Solidarité pour l'Autonomie* – CNSA): 600.5 M€ (+1.7%)**

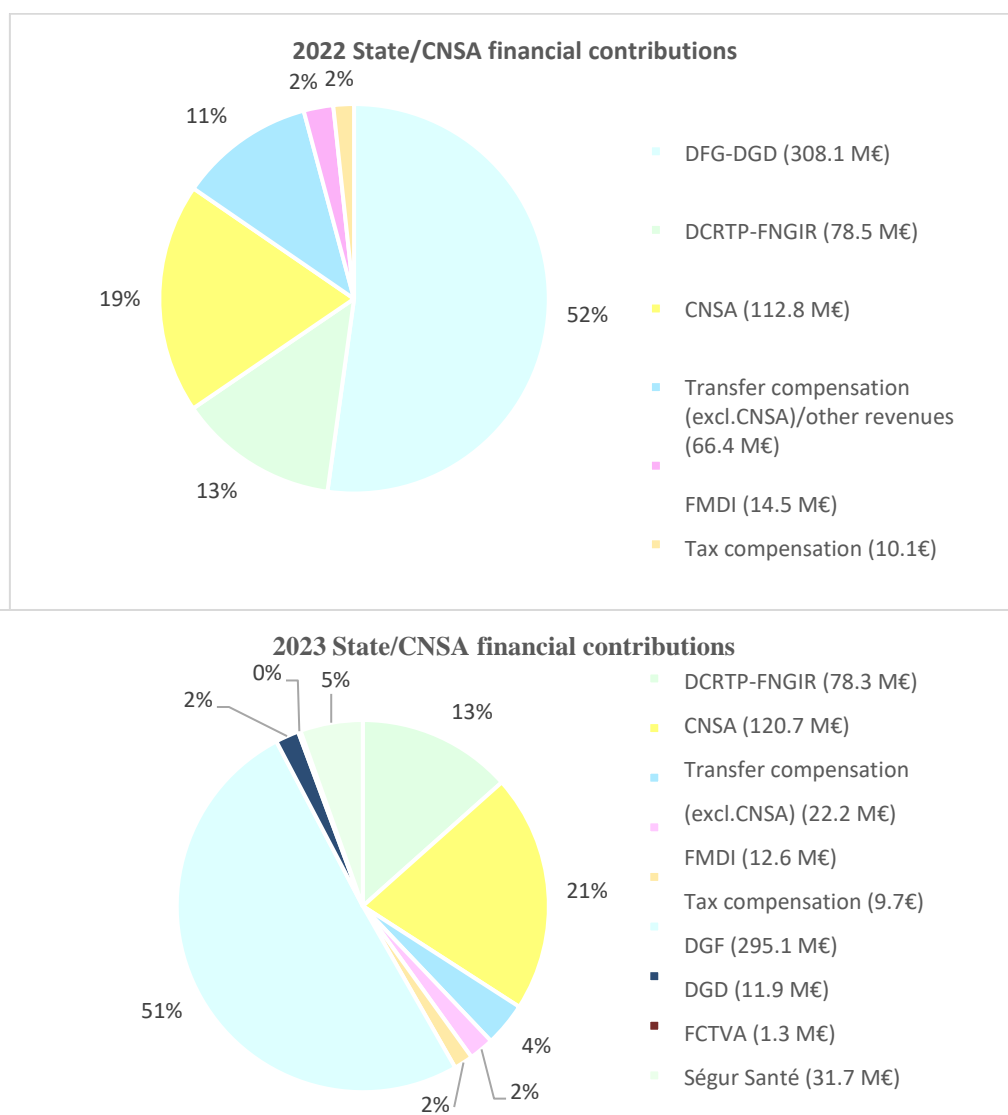
The DGF still represents the largest share of this financial support, with 295.1 M€, although seeing a fall of 1.1 M€, a trend observed for several years. This erosion, even minimal, is penalizing in periods of inflation (+4.9% in France in 2023 according to INSEE) and the Département mobilised, alongside *Départements de France*, to seek indexation of this endowment to inflation. This request has not been successful. The general decentralisation allowance (DGD) is unchanged for several years (11.9 M€).

A number of compensation schemes ensure that the 2011 tax reforms are financially neutral: the national individual resources guarantee fund (FNGIR) (37.7 M€), stable, and the professional tax reform compensation allowance (DCRTP) (40.6 M€), a slight fall.

The Département has also received compensation of 12.6 M€ in respect of the employment integration mobilisation fund (FMDI). This is used to mitigate RSA financing shortfalls and has fallen (-12.7%).

Also allocated by way of compensation, are the equalised compensation endowment (DCP) in an amount of 22.2 M€ (-3.6%) and the direct taxation compensation allowance (9.7 M€, an amount that has also fallen by 4.4%). It should be noted that the Département received 16.5 M€ in payment from the DMTO fund.

Allowances from the CNSA to fund the personal autonomy allowance (allocation personnalisée d'autonomie - APA), disability allowance (prestations de compensation du handicap - PCH) and the grant to the departmental centre for persons with disabilities (maison Départementale des personnes handicapées - MDPH) amount to 120.7 M€ (+7%). However, this amount and its evolution have to be reconciled with the expenses paid under the related public policies. The Département has also collected revenues under the Ségur health plan. These are not negligible (31.7 M€) but are once again to be reconciled with the impact of this plan on the budgets committed by the local authority towards medico-social establishments.



NB: excluding FNGIR management fees and allocation to the DMTO equalisation fund.

### Other revenue: 179.9 M€

Income and contributions derived from the social sector form the main part of this item at 120.5 M€. These have increased (+11.2 M€), in line with the Département's investment in the Solidarity Pact (formerly Poverty Plan), the battle against exclusion and for unaccompanied minors (MNA). Furthermore, improving recoveries from beneficiaries continues to bear fruit.

The other receipts derived from income from estate services and miscellaneous sales, contributions, financial income and exceptional items, and do not require any particular commentary.

This item also includes reversals of provisions in an amount of 14.2 M€ and disposals, in an amount of 5 M€. The Département, which was provisioning following the analyses of the accounts of the insured organizations, reviewed its working method two years ago. If the guaranteed bodies continue to be monitored annually (balance sheet and income statement analyses, and determination of summary ratios), this will no longer lead to the automatic allocation of a lump sum provision.



## CHANGES IN OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Operating expenditure amounts to 2,432.5 M€ (+2.3%). Excluding income mitigation and provisions, it amounts to 2,341.8 M€ (+95.7 M€ and +3.7%).

Operating expenditure (excluding provisions and income mitigation)					
Item	2022	Structure	2023	Structure	Change 2021/2022
Staff	408 071	18.2%	432 489	18.2%	+6%
General services	86 837	3.9%	108 517	3.9%	+25%
Security	83 463	3.7%	86 833	3.7%	+4%
Education	70 894	3.2%	72 028	3.2%	+1.6%
Culture and social life	52 362	2.3%	46 435	2.3%	-11.3%
Social policies	1 472 151	65.5%	1 525 232	65.5%	+3.6%
Networks - Infrastructure	10 412	0.5%	10 762	0.5%	+3.4%
Development - Environment	13 222	0.6%	11 443	0.6%	-13.5%
Transport	35 189	1.6%	35 678	1.6%	+1.4%
Local development	13 465	0.6%	12 396	0.6%	-7.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 246 066</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2 341 814</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>+4.3%</b>

*In thousands of euros*

### Social welfare and solidarity spending: 1,525.2 M€ (+3.6%).

The annual survey of the national observatory of social action (ODAS) highlights that the social and medico-social expenditure of the départements in 2023 saw the largest increase in the last ten years, at +5.2%. ODAS points out that the increase is greater than inflation, and than that observed during the pandemic.

Three sectors in particular are concerned: children, disability, and personnel costs. Children, at +10.2%, account for 42% of the overall increase<sup>92</sup>.

In the Bouches-du-Rhône, expenses increased by 53 M€, or +3.6%. They are heavily burdened by individual solidarity allowances (AIS) which amounted to 792.3 M€ (+14.6 M€).

RSA allowances have stabilised (459.3 M€) in line with the continuing active professional integration policy. In particular, the Département is testing enhanced support for 2,400 beneficiaries, and is continuing to implement specific tools based on putting beneficiaries and businesses in touch. The number of beneficiaries increased from 64,133 in December 2022 to 62,498 in December 2023, and 30.2 M€ was committed to integration initiatives.

APA expenditure increased by 4.3% under the combined effect of the number of beneficiaries and tariff rates. PCH expenditure continued its sustained increase (144.8 M€ and + 4.4%). There are 24,437 APA beneficiaries and 10,502 for PCH (8,495 adults and 2,007 children).

<sup>92</sup> Source: ODAS, June 2024

Senior citizens policy remains a priority, beyond the purely regulatory aspect. Indeed, the homes for the elderly scheme makes use of 43 dedicated premises together with a mobile facility, spread throughout the territory, offering welcome, advice and support to those concerned. Nearly 35,000 requests were processed (digital assistance, health, retirement, taxes, housing) and 5,406 workshops were organised. The homes recorded nearly 200,000 visits, with 33,524 users registered.

Child-related expenditure amounted to 256.6 M€. MNAs remain a sensitive subject, with 65.4 M€ and 902 young people as of 31 December 2023. Adding up the contracts for young adults ex-MNA, the Département takes care of 1,794 young people. More generally, 5,372 minors and young adults are placed under the responsibility of the Département compared to 5,069 in 2022, an increase of 6% over one year. Children policy manages 4,626 traditional and 171 reinforced open environment educational initiative (AEMO) measures.

The policy for people with disabilities deployed 231.8 M€ (+4.8%), supporting accommodation, transport and home care. In 2023, 49 places were created in establishments and two independent living residences opened, offering 16 beds for ageing disabled people.

Finally, initiatives in favour of the public health sector amounted to 8.5 M€. The Département is a pivotal part of the vaccination campaign against the papillomavirus, involving 44 middle schools and 2,100 5th grade pupils.

The impact of the Segur Health Plan on solidarity policies should be noted. It is only partially compensated. In 2023, in total (including the human resources component of the local authority), the net cost for the Département is 26.6 M€. In particular, the scheme does not take into account children's expenditure, which is nevertheless the most dynamic.

#### **Staff costs: 432.5 M€ (+4%)**

Staff costs increased by 24.4 M€.

This increase is mainly related to unilateral measures by the State. These are cyclical provisions such as the 1.5% increase in the index point on 1 July 2023 (5 M€ on a full year basis), the purchasing power bonus or indeed the Ségur Santé plan, or more traditional effects related to the status such as the deployment of the compensation scheme taking into account functions, hardships, expertise and professional commitment (*RIFSEEP*) or the career paths, careers and remuneration (*PPCR*) for the benefit of all local authority officers.

The Département also strives to preserve the quality of public services by adapting in-field teams engaged in policies deemed to be a priority (seniors, persons in the process of integration, middle school students).

Again, this trend is observed in all départements with an increase of 7.1% in 2023 (source: OFGPL report, June 2024).

#### **Local authority general administrative expenses: 199.2 M€ (+14.6%)**

These expenses, other than those related to equalization, provisions or the debt, cover the daily operations of the Département (cleaning, caretaking, buildings maintenance). These are expenses sensitive to inflation (+ 2.8 M€).

Finance costs have almost doubled, from 18 M€ to 35 M€ as a result of the rise in interest rates. The ECB's rate hiking cycle ended in September 2023, with an increase in the key rate to 4%. The average rate on the Département's debt has risen from 0.95% to 2.45% in two years. Nevertheless,

it remains below that of the other départements (2.80% as at 31/12/2023 according to *Finance active*). On average, the finance costs of the départements increased by 30.8% in 2023, representing 20% of their net operating surplus. Apart from the 7 départements with a negative net operating surplus, 26 départements bear finance costs equivalent to more than a quarter of their net operating surplus<sup>93</sup>.

Purchases and external expenses of all départements increased by 9.6% in 2023, with a 56.7% increase in the "energy" item (*Source: OFGPL report, June 2024*).

### **Security: 86.8 M€ (+4%)**

Security policies mainly cover fire prevention and protection of forest areas. This includes the the Departmental fire and rescue service (SDIS) (73.6 M€) and the Marseille fire brigade (10 M€).

In 2023, the Département received the *Grand Prix de l'Innovation* "An opportunity for the territories". This prize, awarded by Départements de France, recognised the establishment of the Forestry Support Group, which unites the expertise of forest fire and regular fire fighters, and their intervention in the event of a major fire.

### **Education and schools policy: 72 M€ (+1.6%)**

The implementation of the "Charlemagne" plan, launched in 2017, continues with the modernisation and securing of school establishments, the distribution of educational content tablets to schoolchildren (100% digital schools target) and increased educational support for pupils.

Finally, in order to reduce family outgoings, a back-to-school kit adapted to the requirements of educational establishments was distributed to all schoolchildren (public and private sectors) and a special contribution towards those benefiting from school meals was also paid to families. A total of 106,000 kits were distributed in 2023, including to pupils remaining out of school for medical reasons.

The quality of school catering is a fundamental social, health and environmental issue. In order to bring improvement, a central purchasing unit was created in 2023, with 69 middle schools taking part. In 2022/2023, 119 volunteer public middle schools and signatories of the school catering Charter benefited from the "La Provence on my plate" grant for assistance in purchasing local, fresh, seasonal produce from organic or sustainable farming. Finally, thanks to refrigeration units and mobile sorting tables, food waste has decreased by 40% since 2018.

Note here the impact of inflation in the allocations paid to the colleges (+ 5.6 M€ for utilities).

### **Culture, social life, youth, sports and leisure: 46.4 M€ (-11.3%)**

Departmental funding contributed to the organization of a number of initiatives and events for the benefit of the Bouches-du-Rhône population: exhibitions organised by the various cultural facilities belonging to the local authority (ABD, museums, Aix-en-Provence gallery, Château d'Avignon), the Marseille-Cassis race, the Open13 Provence (tennis tournament), the Marseillaise Pétanque World Cup, and indeed Christmas carols

All of these events contribute to the quality of life and appeal of the Département.

The CJeune card, offered to 82,484 young people aged 15 to 25, gives them access to cultural, sports or academic support activities for an amount of €150. It relies on 2,000 local partners.

The Département has been tasked by the Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games–Paris 2024 with leading a local committee bringing together all the region's

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<sup>93</sup> Source: OFGPL report, June 2024

stakeholders, in view of the torch relay on 12 May 2024. And the Bouches-du-Rhône hosted 17 preparation camps for the international Olympic and Paralympic teams, including the France sailing team.

**Transport: 35.7 M€ (+1.4%)**

As every year, these costs include essentially the compensatory endowment for the transfer of transport powers to the métropole Aix-Marseille-Provence (31.9 M€). The remainder goes towards financing the operations of the Syndicat Mixte de Traversées du Delta du Rhône which manages the ferries that ensure transport links in the Camargue (3.8 M€).

**Local development, agriculture and land use planning: 34.6 M€ (-7.9%)**

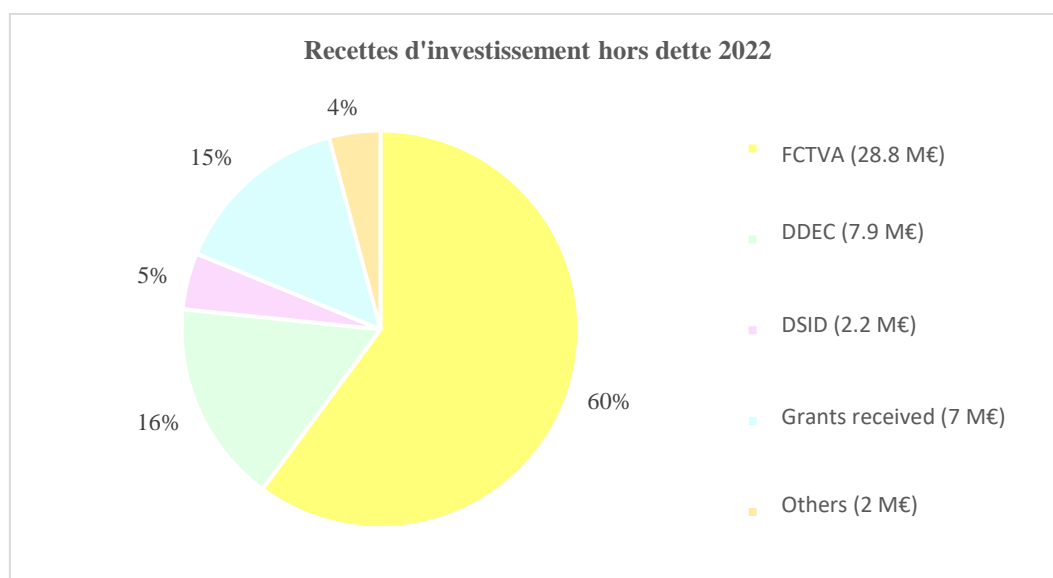
These policies include actions in the spheres of local development (infrastructure maintenance, of roads in particular, cooperation projects, promoting the Département through tourism), planning and development of the region, and the environment and agriculture, with support for farms in Bouches-du-Rhône, but also sectoral structuring and product promotion.

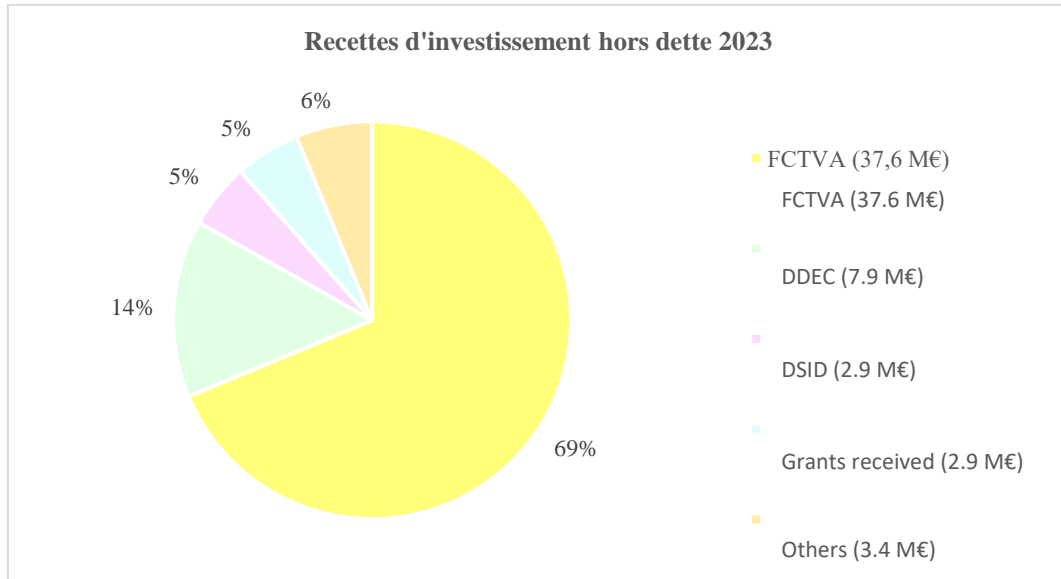
The Bouches-du-Rhône is the leading département in terms of the number of fruits and vegetables grown (tomato, peaches/nectarines, olives, rice, lettuce, Guyot pears) with 40% of useful agricultural land farmed organically or in conversion. The Département therefore ranks second in mainland France (Source: Agreste, February 2024).

**CAPITAL SECTION**

**CHANGES IN CAPITAL INCOME (EXCLUDING DEBT)**

The Département des Bouches-du-Rhône’s capital income, excluding debt is 54.7 M€ and continues to increase this year (+14.1% after +16.5% in 2022).





The composition and volume of these revenues change relatively little, with the exception of the FCTVA and the département investment support endowment (DSID), driven by local authority investments.

The majority are based on FCTVA, linked to the Département's eligible investments, and which is increasing sharply due to the dynamism of the Département. The DSID scheme is gradually increasing in importance, due in particular to the extraordinary budget envelope allocated as a result of the crisis (the Département has obtained almost 6 M€ in this regard), and a budget of more than 3 M€ secured in 2023 for the works necessary to install solar panels on school roofs.

More generally, the Département is endeavouring to boost its revenue and is exploiting all potential resources. In 2023, nearly one million euros in ERDF grants was received.

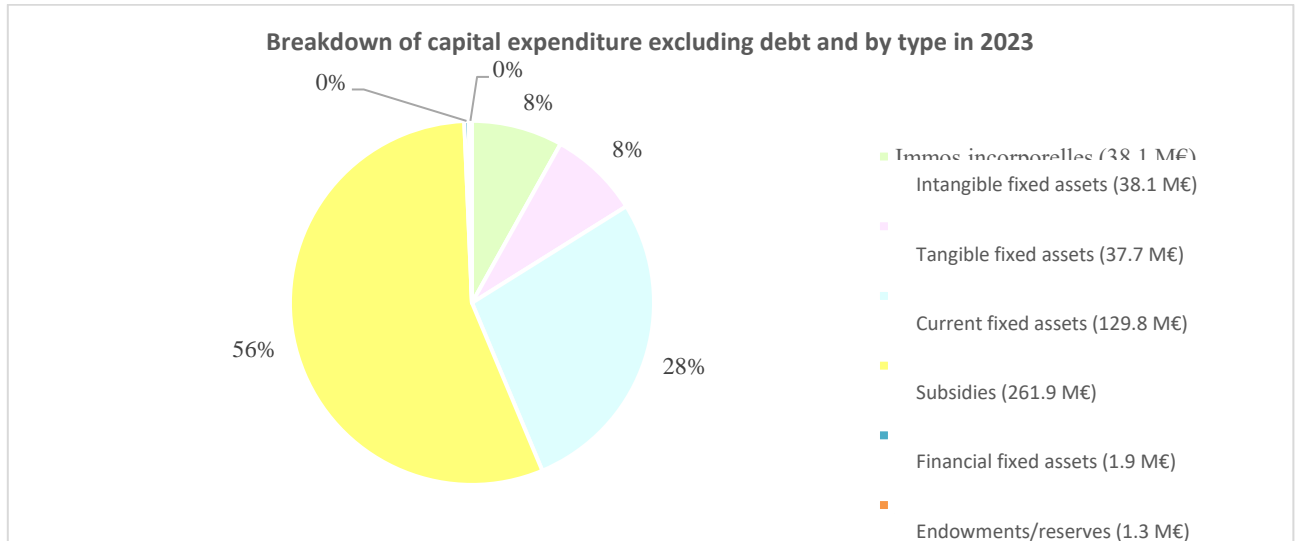
#### **CHANGES IN CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (EXCLUDING DEBT)**

The capital section amounts to 563.6 M€ including debt principal repayments. Excluding debt, capital expenditure equalled 470.8 M€, a fall of 21.1%. After neutralising an extraordinary real estate transaction carried out in 2022, the decrease is 13%. This development is consistent with the local authority's desire to create an investment buffer that gradually adapts to its financial position.

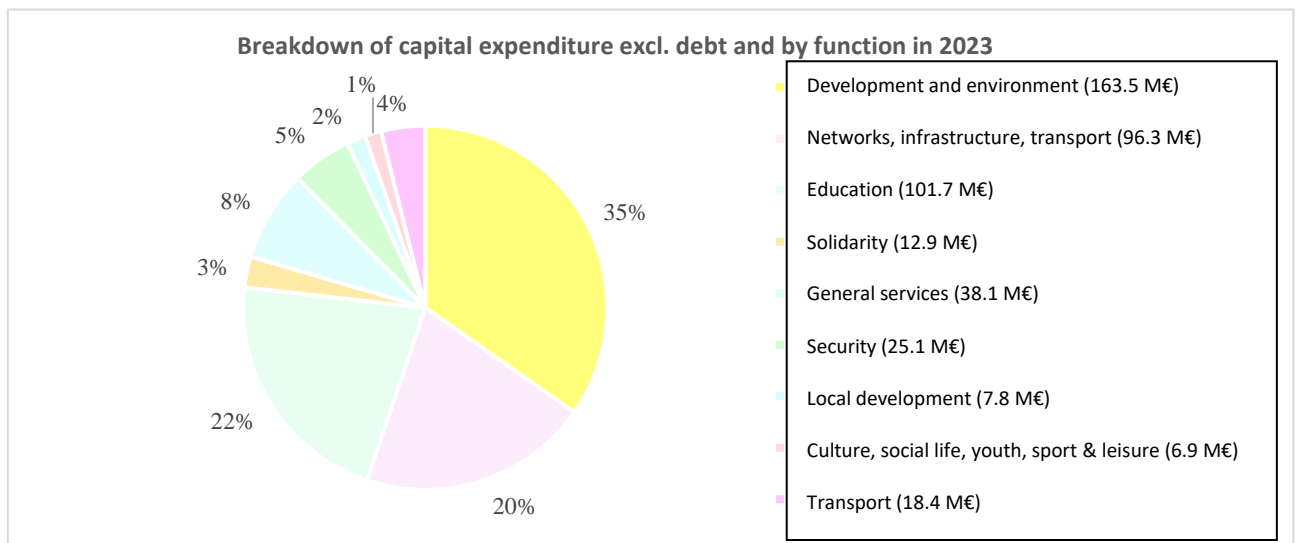
Investments are split between grants (56%) and direct project ownership (44%). This confirmed rebalancing is consistent with the executive's directives. In 2022, equipment grants already represented 55% of expenditure (compared to 67% in 2020 and 63.4% in 2021).

These expenses relate mainly to local development. In addition to financial aid for communes all of whose measures now have an "ecological transition" component, this section includes measures aimed at the public to combat climate change (Air-wood premium, *Provence Eco-Rénov*). In 2023, 2,246 grants were allocated under *ProvenceEcoRénov*, covering 32 M€ of energy renovation work. And 971 grants have been awarded to substitute more efficient and less polluting heating equipment.

Direct investment represents 208.9 M€. It includes expenditure directly assumed by the local authority, whether for works (roads and highways, school, cultural and sports buildings, natural spaces) in an amount of almost 130 M€, spending on equipment (buildings, school computer equipment, transport, security) in an amount of around 38 M€ (of which 17.4 M€ for school digital equipment) or survey or similar fees in an amount of 38 M€.



All of these action areas are broken down by reference to their various functions as presented below.



### **Planning and environment: 163.5 M€**

This item accounts for almost 35% of the total amount of actual capital expenditure. After strong growth in 2020 and 2021 (increase in the number of measures to combat global warming, such as support for the renovation of housing or encouragement for the adoption of low-carbon heating modes) cruising speed has been achieved.

The priority given to daily quality-of-life is affirmed via the funding for communes (127.2 M€) or housing and town planning policy (20 M€), with the Département being committed to a plan to combat sub-standard housing alongside the Métropole.

In 2023, the *Provence verte* scheme supported 43 urban space renaturing projects. Since its inception in 2020, this scheme has enabled 5,165 trees to be planted (urban and school environments, shared

gardens and orchards), 30 projects to promote growing (shared gardens, agricultural farm and municipal allotment), 102 developments to combat hotspots (greening, covered playgrounds, shading, fountains) including 16 projects to de-waterproof schoolyards and 25 projects to support biodiversity (insect hotel, nesting box, apiary, educational facilities, pigeon contraceptive boxes).

### **Education: 101.7 M€**

In 2023, more than 100 M€ was devoted to the 187 public and private schools within the Département's authority, including 24.6 M€ for digitizing schools.

In 2023, the Département launched a project to solarize an initial phase of 50 roofs of public middle schools destined to receive photovoltaic power plants, via a call for expressions-of-interest. The construction programme is expected to continue until the end of the first semester 2026, after a number of roofs have been renovated, which will also provide them with energy performance characteristics necessary to meet the Département's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. This work also improves the thermal comfort of the schools: the insulation limits heat loss in winter and the light-coloured waterproof facing reduces over-heating in summer.

Research and higher education, challenges for for the region's development and attractiveness, and up-skilling of residents received 1.1 M€, strengthening essential sectors such as biotechnology, cinema and Mediterranean cooperation.

### **Networks - infrastructure and transport: 96.3 M€**

The mobility plan continues to be pursued with nearly 54 M€ earmarked for alternative transport solutions (metro modernisation, tramway extension, modernisation of the Saint Charles railway station). These operations are in addition to the cycle path programme (2.2 M€).

### **General services: 38.1 M€**

This function is essentially designed to provide technical support for the day-to-day operation of services and to implement the département's public policies: IT solutions, equipment, vehicles, furniture, building maintenance.

### **Security: 25.1 M€**

The Département assists the SDIS13 by funding programmes for the acquisition of equipment and the construction/restoration of emergency response centres. This represented 18.9 M€ in 2023.

Initiatives for the prevention of fire in or maintenance of forest areas also help to protect and enhance our natural heritage. This is a decisive issue in a context of unprecedented climatic episodes (increased drought, mega-fires). For the record, since 2022, the Département adopted a strategy for the prevention and preservation of biodiversity.

### **Solidarity: 12.9 M€**

The Département supports the acquisition of innovative technologies in the sphere of health and contributes to the financing of works in health care establishments, such as the Hôpital de La Ciotat, the Tarascon hospital centre or indeed the St Joseph Hospital. The reception facilities for the Département's public are also undergoing improvements in an amount of 6.4 M€, with these organisations playing an essential role for the benefit of isolated or vulnerable sections of the public.

## **Local development, tourism and agriculture: 7.8 M€**

The Département has for many years supported the territory's structural projects such as Euroméditerranée or the mid- and top-range leisure craft facilities La Ciotat Shipyards and also sectors such as tourism and agriculture to simultaneously develop attractiveness, business and employment. The development of new practices (organic agriculture, sustainable tourism, local consumption) is encouraged.

## **Culture, social life, youth, sport and leisure: 6.9 M€**

Support for arts education, cultural creativity and broadcasting, historical heritage and cultural amenities continues.

## **B. MAJOR EQUILIBRIUMS**

### **Weakening surplus**

Gross operating surplus refers to the amount by which operating income exceeds operating expenditure. Combined with capital revenues, it is used to fund capital expenditure.

The decline in DMTO revenue, combined with a less dynamic VAT and especially the sustained increase in social spending, has immediately impacted on the gross operating surplus, which has fallen from 405.7 M€ to 214.3 M€, a fall of more than 47%. This situation is common to all départements, whose surpluses have fallen by an average of 39.6%.

To calculate the net operating surplus, repayment of debt principal (92.9 M€) must be deducted. Net operating surplus is 121.4 M€ (310.7 M€ in 2022).

Once again, at an average fall of 54.1%, the situation is common to all départements.

According to the Agence France Locale barometer, published in June 2024, in 2023, out of 95 départements, one presents a negative gross operating surplus (as in 2022) and seven, a negative net operating surplus (compared to two in 2022).

### **A debt that is increasing but maintaining equilibrium**

At 31 December 2023, the Département's debt stock totalled 1,933.1 M€. New borrowings in 2023 amounted to 242.2 M€ (including 206.2 M€ in bank debt and 36 M€ in bond debt).

This indebtedness comprises 144 contracts all classified 1-A, in other words the lowest risk category in the "Gissler" scale (1: Euro-zone index, A: plain vanilla fixed rate; plain vanilla floating rate; fixed-to-floating rate or vice versa).

Debt is split evenly between fixed-rate (55%) and floating-rate (45%), and between 21 lenders and brokers, principally La Banque Postale (16.5%) ahead of Banque des Territoires (11.3%). "Livret A" linked products account for 9% of total debt. The Département endeavours to diversify its lenders in order to secure access to external financing.

It is in this capacity that it established several partnerships with the European Investment Bank and with two new players in 2022, the cooperative bank, La Nef and Crédit Maritime. In 2022, it also reconnected with CEPAC, which had long been absent from bids.

Outstanding debt is split amongst bank loans, 63%, and bond debt, 37% and its average life is 9 years and 10 months.



As at 31/12/2023, the average interest rate on outstanding debt is 2.45% (0.95% at 31/12/2021, then 1.48% at 31/12/2022). This marked increase is linked to that of key rates imposed by the ECB since July 2022. For the départements, the average rate of outstanding debt at 31/12/2023 is 2.80% (source: Finance active March 2024).

In 2023 once again, the EMTN programme was mobilised to a lesser extent in view of the less attractive financial terms. Three issues totalling 36 M€ were however made for maturities consistent with the debt extinguishment curve. This is a national trend. According to a HSBC study dated 31/12/2023, bond issuance totalled 2.347 Bn€ in 2023 compared to 2.975 Bn€ in 2022.

As of 31 December 2023, 793 M€ of securities had been issued by the Département under its EMTN programme. The number of outstanding notes on this date being 723 M€ (20 M€ repaid in 2020, 2021 and 2022, and 10 M€ in 2023).

The report published by HSBC on 31 December 2023 and covering the period 2018/2023 shows the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône as the leading French département issuer in volume terms, and the 8<sup>th</sup> local authority issuer in France (all strata combined). It is 4<sup>th</sup> in terms of the number of issues, all strata combined.

The 470.8 M€ of investment made in the 2023 financial year was financed by several borrowings for a total amount of 242.2 M€. They correspond to three bond issues for a total of 36 M€ (one concluded with BGC Aurel - GFI and two with TP ICAP). They also include 206.2 M€ in bank loans, broken down as follows: two loans contracted with Société Générale (20 M€ each), the La Banque Postale (15 and 50 M€ each), Arkéa (10 M€ each), CEPAC (30 M€ each), a loan subscribed with La Nef (1.2 M€) and one with SAARLB (20 M€).

No EIB partnership has been mobilised. On the other hand, the Département has entered into discussions to conclude new framework agreements, one for the *cit  scolaire internationale*, signed in 2023 for an amount of 18 M€, and the other concerning a soft mobility project, completed in 2024.

Similarly, discussions have been held with the Banque des Territoires to secure an "ecological transformation" loan envelope. These culminated in the signing of an 80 M€ contract in 2024.

In terms of cash flow, the 2023 financial year sits in line with the new strategy adopted in terms of the use of bond issues given their now more onerous terms. Ad hoc drawdowns on credit lines are now preferred to premature use of bond issues.

Indeed, twenty drawdowns were made in 2023 for amounts ranging between 1.3 and 25 M€, with terms of 1 to 17 days.

Since 30 June 2021 the Département has had a 150 M€ NEU CP programme rated F1+ by Fitch Ratings. This programme makes cash flow more fluid and secure. Taking into account both the increase in rates and lack of need, no issue has been made since July 2022, and the programme was also not used in 2023. It does, however, offer a worthwhile alternative to the credit lines and the Département ensures that it is kept up to date, under the authority of the Banque de France.

This would appear to be a general trend. In 2023 whilst the overall volume of issuance remained stable at an annual average of 5 Bn€, maturities have shortened, confirming the lesser reliance on this instrument (Source : CMK note, 29 January 2024).

## **2023 investment finance**

Therefore, the breakdown of the Département's investment budget financing structure is as follows:

Uses		Resources		
Type	Amount	Type	Amount	Distribution
Investment excluding debt	470.8 M€	Net operating surplus	121.4 M€	25.8%
		Borrowings	242.2 M€	51.4%
		Capital revenue	54.7 M€	11.6%
		Working capital	52.5 M€	11.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>597 M€</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>470.8 M€</b>	<b>100%</b>

Working capital amounted to 7.2 M€ at year-end.

## 5.2 Clarifications on the 2023 administrative account

Execution of the 2023 financial year proved tense, weighed down by the fall in the main revenue (DMTO) and the sustained pace of inescapable expenditure.

In addition to the observations previously made, the 2023 results were marked by:

### (a) Weakening observed almost unanimously

In the Bouches-du-Rhône, the gross operating surplus generated was 214.3 M€ compared to 407.5 M€ in 2022.

The size of this surplus, resulting in a net surplus of 124.3 M€, nevertheless helps finance more than one quarter of investment, by tapping into the working capital fund consolidated over previous financial years.

After making strong progress in 2022, the gross operating surplus of the départements deteriorated sharply in 2023 (-39.6% according to the OFGPL report of June 2024).

On 31/12/2023, the Département's outstanding debt represented 933 €/inhabitant and its solvency, 9.2 years. These strained results can be found elsewhere: €520 for the million plus inhabitant départements as of 31 December 2023 (source: OFGPL report June 2024) and a near doubling of the average solvency for the départements, from 2.6 years to 4.2 years (source: OFGPL report June 2024). For the million plus inhabitant départements, solvency increases from 3 to 5.7 years, again nearly the double (source: DGFIP).

### (b) Persistent external constraints

Like all local authorities, the Département is strongly constrained by the unilateral decisions of the State, insufficiently or not at all compensated.

These measures are sometimes cyclical (Segur Santé plan, increase in the index point of civil servants, purchasing power bonus), sometimes structural (career of civil servants). However, even cyclical, their impact is measured in the long term (salary of civil servants, amount of the RSA allowance).

Added to this are inflation, although slowing down (4.9% in France after 5.2% in 2022) and the increase in key rates, which weigh on the cost of managing and maintaining the assets, external expenses and finance costs. These have practically doubled between 2022 and 2023 for the Département.

(c) Scale of investment consistent with the Executive's roadmap

With 470.8 M€, the Département continues to pursue its priority projects (education, mobility, support for energy transition) while remaining within an envelope that is gradually adapting to the new financial constraints.

Investments must be compatible with the funding capacity of the local authority, and their monitoring is a key element of budgetary forecasting.

This slowdown is true for all départements: after an increase of 7.5% in 2022, the pace has increased to 2.4% in 2023, in a still inflationary environment (Source: OFGPL report, June 2024).

(d) Initial results 2024 prompt caution

The year 2024 will most likely also be delicate.

Room for manoeuvre is limited in a still tense environment. As Fitch pointed out in its press release of 31 May 2024, the Département has already made efforts in recent years ("the département has maintained good control over its operating expenditure in recent years").

While the rating agency assesses the 2023 financial year as unusual ("we consider 2023 to be exceptional"), the return to a smoother position will take some time, and tensions are expected to persist until early 2025.

DMTO remains lower than forecast and is estimated at 400 M€. Finance costs have been adjusted pursuant to amending decision n°1 (DM1) and increased to 50.6 M€. The ECB, after an initial cut to the key rate on 12 June 2024, declined to continue in July, favouring the status quo.

Other data are nevertheless more encouraging, such as the number of beneficiaries of the RSA, which has continued to decrease from 62,914 in January 2024 to 61,994 in June 2024.

The real estate market is also showing some encouraging signs. According to the Crédit Logement/CSA observatory, a turning point was reached in February 2024. Loan production increased by 12.2% in volume in the second quarter 2024, and well off households are benefiting from falling prices. Finally, average rates, for all durations combined, stood at 3.66% at the end of June 2024, compared to 4.20% in late 2023. The share of loans granted for terms of over 20 years remains very high (64.2% of loan production), which should help customers borrow more<sup>94</sup>.

However, great vigilance is required against a backdrop that is highly uncertain due to the new legislative and executive environment. A lack of clarity surrounds the contribution to be made by local authorities to the recovery of the public finances as well as financing ecological transition.

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<sup>94</sup> Source : Les Echos, 16 July 2024

## 6. THE PRIMARY BUDGET 2024

### 6.1 Background

Following the budgetary strategy debate held on 13 October 2023, the 2024 primary budget was adopted at the public session held on 8 December 2023.

The background surrounding its preparation is characterised by:

#### ➤ **Sharp deterioration in the financial situation of the départements**

While the 2022 financial year enabled the départements to consolidate their financial situation, 2023 has singularly weakened it<sup>95</sup>.

The downturn in the real estate market (rising rates; falling prices; buyer hesitancy) has led to a sharp drop in DMTO, with an average fall of 22% (22% for the Département).

This was combined with the increase in constrained spending such as solidarity, and in particular children (+10.2% and +11% for the Département). Continuing efforts by the Département in the sphere of professional integration (stabilisation of RSA allowances) has failed to compensate for these movements.

The départements also recorded a significant increase in personnel costs (+7.1%), linked to the revision of the index point on 1 July 2023, the full-year effect of the 2022 measures and the revision of the minimum interprofessional growth wage (SMIC).

All this is reflected in a decrease in the gross operating surplus (-39.6%) and net operating surplus (-54.3%) of the départements. For the Département, the decrease in gross operating surplus amounts to 48%, falling from 410 M€ to 209 M€.

#### ➤ **Confirmation of the Executive's priorities**

The 2024 budget guidelines recalled the Executive's roadmap:

- a multi-annual vision of public policies, particularly in terms of mobility and regional equipment (education, assistance to municipalities),
- an investment volume adapted to the needs of the Département and its population, but still controllable and having to be prioritized,
- rational management of the administration, the latter however being constrained by national decisions (index point of civil servants; Segur Santé; SMIC increase).

#### ➤ **Taking into account the fight against global warming**

The community is committed to achieving carbon neutrality through the deployment of a low-carbon strategy (objectives, actions, measurement indicators).

The fight against global warming is now a management issue (travel, heritage management, daily operation of services) as well as implemented policies (mobility, aid to municipalities, education).

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<sup>95</sup> Source : OFGPL report, June 2024 and ODAS report, July 2024

Both construction and maintenance and heritage maintenance operations include reducing the consumption of carbon-based energy, saving resources and preserving biodiversity through, for example, the installation of solar panels on college roofs or ground drainage techniques.

Awareness-raising initiatives for officers and the population alike are continuing, with innovative tools (Hop! Platform) or workshops (Climate Fresk).

➤ **The challenge of inflation and its direct and indirect effects**

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has no direct impact on the Département or its region. The local authority has committed itself through targeted measures aimed at the populations (reception of refugees, collection and sending of parcels).

On the other hand, it fuelled inflation, especially with energy prices. These increased by 4.8% in June 2024 in France (source: INSEE), while the consumer price index rose by 2.2% (2.5% in the Eurozone according to the European Commission). A close eye is maintained on developments.

Inflation also has indirect effects, particularly in terms of staff costs (increase in the index point of +1.5% 1 July 2023 and award of additional index points) and policy rates.

The cycle of ECB rate increases has continued in 2023, with a refinancing rate reaching 4%. These movements have a direct effect on the cost of debt: for the Département, the average rate of outstanding debt has increased from 0.95% on 31 December 2021 to 1.48% on 31 December 2022 and then 2.45% on 31 December 2023<sup>96</sup>.

ECB rates stabilised before starting to fall (refinancing rate rose to 3.75% in June) and an average rate of 2.35% is expected by the end of the 2024 financial year<sup>97</sup>.

On the other hand, inflation has a positive effect: it drives up VAT revenues, which are nevertheless tending to shrink, as this revenue is also highly dependent on growth.

➤ **The weight of external constraints**

Like all local authorities, the Département is strongly constrained by unilateral measures imposed by the State, whether cyclical (Segur Health Plan) or structural (status of civil servants and automatic career progression). These provisions are usually imperfectly or not at all compensated. And they strain local budgets in the long term (increase in the index point or RSA allocation which it is not possible to reverse).

The increase in operating appropriations under the PB 2024, detailed in the following pages, amounts to 95.5 M€. In particular, the weight of solidarity (4.6% increase in the RSA allowance on 1 April 2024) and that of human resources (the only measures affected by the allocation of additional index points, the purchasing power bonus or indeed the revision of the index point and the minimum wage (SMIC) amount to more than 14 M€) should be highlighted).

The Département strives to reconcile the quality of the public service and controlling operating costs. Neutralising the price increases, general services are being renewed. The progress made in terms of employment integration allows for a downward revision of RSA allocations (460 M€ compared to 474 M€ in the PB 2023).

The report of the OFGPL of June 2024 points to the burden of the new laws applicable to local authorities. Their net cost is estimated at 1.6 Bn€ in 2023.

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<sup>96</sup> Source: Finance Active

<sup>97</sup> Source : Finance Active simulation 22/07/2024

➤ **The prospect of local authority contribution towards repairing the public finances**

The Law No. 2023-1195 of 18 December 2023 on public finance programming for the years 2023 to 2027 replaces that for the period 2018 to 2022, which set out a trajectory to improve debt reduction capacity (ratio between outstanding debt at the accounting year-end date and the gross operating surplus for the past financial year, or the average of the last three financial years) for local authorities whose debt reduction capacity exceeded the national reference ceiling in 2016 (10 years for the départements of which the Département is one). The new law recalls this ceiling, although it does not impose binding measures if the ceiling is exceeded. Nevertheless, the Government has reiterated its desire to involve local authorities in repairing the public finances, where debt is a major issue. At this stage, the practical arrangements of this contribution have not been specified, except for the limit set on any increase in operating expenditure.

The above-mentioned programming law specifies a limit on any increase in their operating expenditure, pinned to inflation – 0.5%, with certain expenses (AIS and child services) being excluded from the calculation basis. Although no sanction or measures of constraint are specified, the Issuer remains extremely vigilant, as it does to any potential change in the DGF.

For the record, in its report of July 2023, the Cour des Comptes stressed the need for local authorities to participate in the recovery of public finances, on the grounds that their good financial health was linked to the transfer of dynamic national taxes.

However, it is more nuanced in its July 2024 report, pointing to the delicate situation for départements and régions. The départements, in particular, after a 2023 financial year synonymous with deterioration, are expecting another difficult year in 2024, with room for manoeuvre considered "slim for a number of them"<sup>98</sup>.

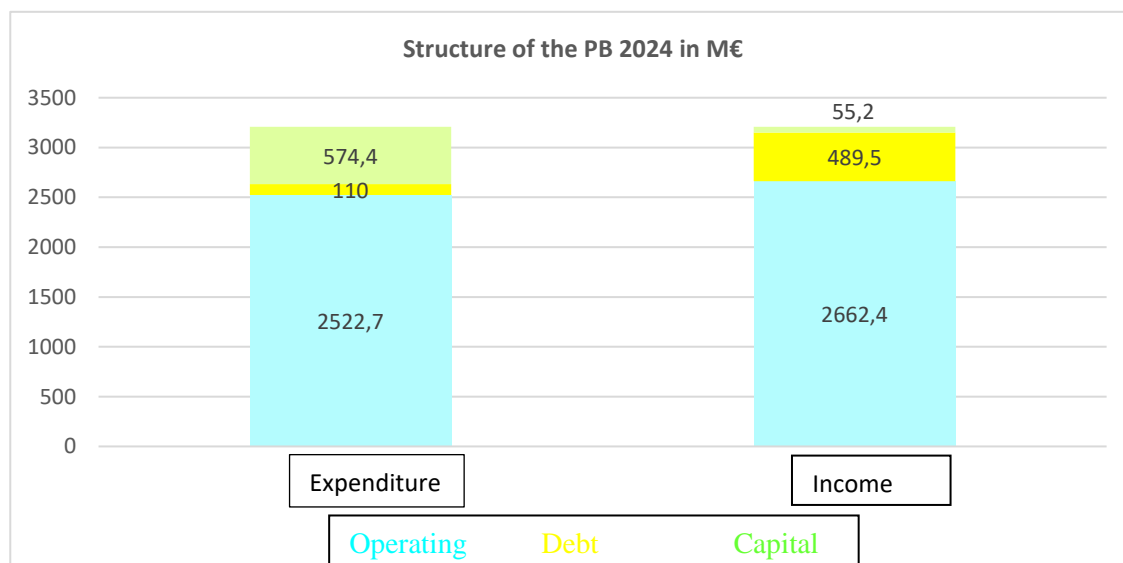
All of these elements will have to be assessed in the new legislative context following the 30 June and 7 July 2024 elections.

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<sup>98</sup> Source : Cour des comptes report July 2024

## 6.2 Analysis of the PB 2024

The PB 2024 is balanced in expenditure and income at 3,207.1 M€ including 684.4 M€ in capital expenditure, including actual budgetary movements and accounting adjustments.



The main budgetary masses are as follows (actual credits in K€):

Main budgetary masses	PB 2023	PB 2024	Change
<b>Actual operating income</b>	2 653 141	2 662 365	0.3 %
<b>Actual operating expenditure</b>	2 427 224	2 522 743	4 %
<b>Gross operating surplus</b>	225 917	139 622	-38.2 %
<b>Actual capital income</b>	495 272	544 768	10 %
. Of which debt	420 980	489 548	16.3 %
. Excluding debt	74 292	55 220	-25.7 %
<b>Actual capital expenditure</b>	721 189	684 390	-5.1 %
. Of which debt	97 000	110 000	13.4 %
. of which expenditure excluding debt	624 189	574 390	-8 %
<b>Net operating surplus</b>	128 917	29 622	-77 %
<b>Programme authorisations</b>	374 365	401 147	7.2 %

Set forth below are the Département's four ancillary budgets:

Item	Capital	Operating	Total	Method of financing
Medical-psycho-pedagogical centre	3.90	2,542.90	2,546.80	Social security (CPOM)
Children and Family Homes Department	286	24,415	24,701	Mainly by allocation from the general budget
Departmental ports	978	994.90	1,972.90	Fees and allocation from the general budget

Departmental analysis laboratory	386	8,755.40	9,141.40	Invoicing of services and compensation from the general budget
<b>Expenditure - ancillary budgets</b>	<b>1,653.90</b>	<b>36,708.20</b>	<b>38,362.10</b>	
Expenditure - general budget	684,389.50	2,522,743.40	3,207,132.90	
<b>Grand total expenditure</b>	<b>686,043.40</b>	<b>2,559,451.60</b>	<b>3,245,495</b>	

Ancillary budget and general budget expenditure– actual credits– in € thousands.

The analysis below relates only to the general budget given the minimal size of the four ancillary budgets.

➤ **Actual operating income voted in the PB 2024 (in M€)**

Chapters	Income	Amount
<b>Direct and indirect taxation</b>	VAT	625
	CVAE Région	95.6
	IFER	9
	TICPE	370.6
	DMTO	510
	TSCA	280
	TCFE	25
	Development Tax	13.3
	TADTS	1.7
<b>74 - Endowments and participations</b>	DGF	294.1
	DGD	11.9
	Tax compensations	9.4
	FMDI	13.4
	DCRTP	40.4
	FNGIR	37.7
	DCP	22.5
	DMTO equalisation	16
	FCTVA	1.5
	CNSA	151.2
<b>Other income</b>	Solidarity	106.8
	Other sectors	19.4
	Dividends	5.9
	Miscellaneous income	1.9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2 662.4</b>

➤ **Definitive capital income (excluding borrowings) voted in the PB 2024 (in M€)**

Income	Amount
FCTVA	30
DDEC	7.9



DSID	2.5
Grants	4.5
Other income	1.1
Disposals	9.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55.2</b>

➤ **Operating expenditure voted in the PB 2024 in M€**

Sectors	PB 2023	Structure	PB 2024	Structure	Change
Solidarity	1 530.6	63.1 %	1 561	61.9 %	2 %
Education/construction - Environment/security	160	6.6 %	166.4	6.6 %	4 %
Local life and culture	65.8	2.7 %	69.6	2.8 %	5.8 %
Planning/networks/ infrastructure/employment	25.4	1.0 %	26.3	1.0 %	3.5 %
<b>Total public policies</b>	<b>1 781.8</b>	<b>73.4 %</b>	<b>1 823.6</b>	<b>72.3 %</b>	<b>2.3 %</b>
General services	494.3	20.4 %	524	20.8 %	5.9 %
<b>Total with general services</b>	<b>2 276.1</b>	<b>93.8 %</b>	<b>2 347</b>	<b>93.0 %</b>	<b>3.1 %</b>
Non-functional expenditure	151.1	6.2 %	175.4	7.0 %	16.1 %
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>2 427.2</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>2 522.7</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>3.9 %</b>

➤ **Capital expenditure voted in the PB 2024 (in M€)**

Sectors	PC					PA		
	PB 2023	Structure	PB 2024	Structure	Change	PB 2023	PB 2024	Change in M€
Solidarity	11	1.5 %	7	1.1 %	-30.5 %	1.6	11.3	9.7
Education/construction - Environment/security	156.2	21.7 %	153.6	22.4 %	-1.7 %	104.4	117.3	12.9
Local life and culture	229.9	31.9 %	179.4	26.2 %	-22 %	114.1	121.2	7.1
Planning/networks/ infrastructure/employment	152.6	21.2 %	148.9	21.8 %	-2.4 %	82.9	77.5	-5.4
<b>Total public policies</b>	<b>549.2</b>	<b>76.2 %</b>	<b>489.2</b>	<b>71.5 %</b>	<b>-11 %</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>327.3</b>	<b>24.3</b>
General services	70.8	9.8 %	84	12.3 %	18.6 %	71.5	63.8	-7.7
<b>Total with general services</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>86 %</b>	<b>573.2</b>	<b>83.8 %</b>	<b>-8 %</b>	<b>374.5</b>	<b>391.1</b>	<b>16.6</b>
Non-functional expenditure	101.1	14 %	111.2	16.2 %	10 %	0	10	10
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>721.1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>684.4</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>374.5</b>	<b>401.1</b>	<b>26.6</b>

## **I – Income situation**

Operating and capital income (excluding debt) amounted to 2,662.4 M€ and 55.2 M€ respectively.

### **A – Operating income**

The replacement of the TFPB, and henceforth, CVAE by a portion of VAT has profoundly changed the structure of revenues, with indirect taxation now the predominant source (almost 70% of operating revenue).

Regardless of the 2023 below expectation results, in particular for DMTO (479 M€ recorded compared to 613 M€ specified in the PB) or even, to a lesser extent, VAT (596.7 M€ collected, with 144.3 M€ for CVAE and 456.5 M€ for TFPB), revenues are still cautiously assessed, increasing slightly by 0.3%.

As in the previous financial year, they are split mainly between indirect taxation (1,826 M€), financial support and endowments (598 M€) and direct taxation (105 M€). VAT is a source of dynamism, especially in a period of inflation, but sensitive to growth. It slowed down between 2022 and 2023 (+3.4% in France in 2023 compared to +8.1% between 2021 and 2022).

#### **- Indirect taxation (1,826 M€)**

Since 2021, this includes the national VAT portion allocated to the Département to compensate for the transfer of TFPB towards the communes. An additional portion was added in 2023 for the removal of the CVAE programmed as part of the reduction of production taxes. Linked to the economic situation, VAT increases the volatility of the community's revenues. Furthermore, the Département has no power in terms of its rate, or derogations or control mechanisms. Finally, with after-the-fact adjustments making it hard to decipher, its assessment is tricky. A floor is, however, guaranteed and historically the national income from this tax has rather tended to increase. The PB 2024 provides for 625 M€.

Following the exceptional year 2022 (613 M€), DMTO revenue has fallen sharply (479 M€) due to the abrupt downturn in the real estate market. DMTO is assessed cautiously at 510 M€, based on the assumption of a very slow and gradual recovery of the real estate market (falling interest rates, price stabilisation). However, the Département is expected to remain a net contributor to the DMTO equalisation fund for approximately 61 M€.

The other revenues (688.6 M€ with TICPE, TSCA, TCFE, development tax) take into account 2023 execution and are stable overall with continued growth for TSCA (+7.1% in 2023 and +2.2% in the PB 2024).

#### **- State and CNSA financial contributions (598 M€)**

For DGF, an amount of 294 M€ has been entered in the PB 2024. Like other local authorities, the Département deplores its lack of indexation to inflation.

DGD has remained constant for years, at 11.9 M€. Similarly, DCRTP has fallen slightly at 40.4 M€. The other compensatory allowances are estimated at 9.4 M€, also slightly down.

Other revenues are calculated cautiously by reference to 2023 figures or available data.

The Département endeavours to boost and diversify to best effect its external revenues, by exploiting all funds made available by the State and the European Union, in particular for the recovery and ecological transition.

## - Direct tax (105 M€)

The abolition of CVAE is staggered between 2023 and 2027 for businesses. Conversely, the disappearance of CVAE has taken effect for local authorities since 2023. It is replaced by a portion of VAT. The portion paid by the Région in respect of the transfer of transport powers has not changed pursuant to the agreement signed between the two local authorities.

IFER is estimated at 9 M€, a stable amount. The region's numerous electrical energy projects are still too recent to truly appreciate their impact.

## B – Capital income

At 55.2 M€, capital income returned to a more usual amount, with 2023 being characterised by FCTVA boosted by an extraordinary real estate transaction completed in 2022 (purchase of the Pixelia building for 55.4 M€). As a reminder, between 2020 and 2022, the average budgeted capital income was 51 M€.

FCTVA equalled 30 M€, the typical amount related to the local authority's investments.

The proceeds of the disposals are estimated at 9.2 M€, consistent with the management of the departmental assets. However, this is a random revenue item because it depends on buying and selling procedures that can be complex.

Items	PB 2023	Structure	PB 2024	Structure	Change
FCTVA	40.6	54.6 %	30	54.3 %	-26.1 %
DDEC	7.9	10.6 %	7.9	10.6 %	0 %
DGE-DSID	1.5	2 %	2.5	2 %	66.7 %
Grants received	9.9	13.3 %	4.5	13.3 %	-54.5 %
Disposals	13.2	17.8 %	9.2	17.8 %	-30.3 %
Other income	1.1	1.5 %	1.1	1.5 %	0 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>-25.7 %</b>

## C – The search for additional revenue

The Département is gearing up to put forward projects that may potentially benefit from budgets established under various national and European recovery plans or ecological transition aid schemes.

At the standing committee meeting of 24 June 2022, the Département made a commitment, alongside the State and the Région, under the departmental section of the contract for the future. The 2021/2027 contract for the future represents 5.1 Bn€ of investment in the PACA region, distributed between twelve strategic areas such as soft mobility or local solidarity.

Furthermore, the Département organises itself each year with a view to obtaining DSID funding. In 2023, the local authority received nearly 3 M€ (including nearly 1 M€ for the works necessary for solarizing school roofs) and an agreement in principle for a 2024 grant of 1.56 M€ was obtained for the creation of a crèche offering 30 places.

The Département has obtained 2 M€ as part of the 2024 green fund for the renovation of the Lou Garlaban middle school in Aubagne. This operation was considered exemplary in terms of ecological transition.

Finally, the local authority has been selected by the Oak Fund under the ACTEE 2024 programme for energy renovation works on public property.

## II – Expenditure situation

Operating and capital expenditure amounted to 2,522.7 M€ and 684.4 M€ respectively. CA (commitment authorisations) represent 78.1 M€ and PA (programme authorisations), 401.1 M€.

### A – Operating expenditure

This has increased by 3.9%, or 95.5 M€ all operations included.

As every year, the weighting of social solidarity measures should be underlined. It accounts for 30.7 M€, or around one third, of the increase observed. The corresponding expenditures are for the most part unavoidable.

- **Social spending** (1,561.3 M€, or +2%) once again represents the largest expenditure item. Its weighting in the budget remains roughly constant (62%).

Social and professional integration policy<sup>99</sup> accounts for a budget of 499.2 M€. This amount includes the RSA allowance which totals 460 M€ compared to 474 M€ in the PB 2023 (AA 2023: 459 M€).

In relation to the efforts made on the professional integration of the beneficiaries, the RSA figures have significantly improved: the number of recipients fell from 63,005 in June 2023 to 61,994 in May 2024. The reduction that began in January 2021 was confirmed with the general improvement in the employment situation in France, although it is tending to settle down. In the Bouches-du-Rhône, the number of jobseekers was 109,680 in the first quarter 2024, a decrease of 2.5% over one year<sup>100</sup>. In the first quarter 2024, salaried employment in the Bouches-du-Rhône grew 1% in one year (compared to + 0.8 % for the Région PACA)<sup>101</sup>.

Also noteworthy is the deployment by the Département of the resources made available to beneficiaries. In 2023, more than 30 M€ was committed to integration initiatives and the Département, in partnership with France Travail, launched an experimental reformed RSA for 2,400 beneficiaries, based on tailor-made support. It is too early to learn lessons from this, but the initial feedback appears to be positive.

The job day involved 8,500 people, 144 enterprises and 4,000 offers. The Job Bus completed 42 outings, meeting with 6,552 beneficiaries. The employment accelerator hosted 34 meetings with under-pressure sectors, and 1,980 people participated. Finally, the Job Provence 13 platform presents 6,000 offers and 4,930 CVs online.

The integration policy is estimated at 31.2 M€ in the PB 2024. 8 M€ is also planned for contracts (including the "Provence jobs" scheme which facilitates tutoring).

The senior citizens policy budget (349 M€ excluding entertainment) has increased by 20.7M€ (+6.3%). Personal autonomy support (APA) expenditure amounts to 197.1 M€, increasing by +5.6%, under the dual impact of beneficiaries (24,437 in 2023) and tariffs. Accommodation policy accounted for 116.2 M€, a figure that is more or less stable despite the increasing cost for residential care and the number of persons accommodated. During the 2023 financial year, the "Via trajectory for the elderly" platform was launched with the aim of facilitating the search for institutional places.

The disabled persons policy budget (396.6 M€) increased by 4% (+ 15.4 M€). PCH amounted to 158.9 M€, increasing once again (+5% PB/PB), with the number of recipients regularly continuing to grow

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<sup>99</sup> All of the figures presented in this paragraph are the totals for each public policy referred to.

<sup>100</sup> Source : France travail, 25/04/2024

<sup>101</sup> Source : Urssaf, June 2024

(10,502 in 2023 compared to 10,033 at the end of December 2022). Social accommodation amounted to 209.8 M€ and handicapped schoolchildren's transport, slightly down at 12.3 M€.

Two independent living residences were opened in 2023, offering 173 beds, including 16 for ageing disabled people, and 49 places have been created in establishments.

In a dual concern for the well-being of people and control of expenses, the Département continues its efforts towards alternatives to placement: the Quiétude 13 scheme has 15,522 subscribers in 2023 and inclusive housing has been allocated 5.2 M€.

Details of the individual solidarity allowances (AIS) are set forth in the table below (in millions of euros).

AIS	AA 2020	AA 2021	AA 2022	AA 2023	PB 2024
RSA	506.3	489.7	458.6	460	460
Change	7.20 %	-2.20 %	-6.35 %	0.31 %	0 %
APA	175.3	177.5	180.5	185.3	197
Change	2.7 %	1.8 %	1.3 %	1.7 %	2.7 %
PCH	112.4	119.2	138.6	149	156.4
Change	6.2 %	8 %	16.3 %	7.5 %	5 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>786.4</b>	<b>777.7</b>	<b>794.3</b>	<b>813.4</b>
<b>Change</b>	<b>6.1 %</b>	<b>0.1 %</b>	<b>-1.1 %</b>	<b>2.1 %</b>	<b>2.4 %</b>

Health, children and social welfare mobilised a budget of 311.5 M€ (+4.2%).

Children policy (283.7 M€) increased by 7.8 M€ (PB/PB). Unaccompanied minors (MNA) represented 66 M€, with their number having difficulty in stabilising (902 young people on 31/12/2023 compared to 868 on 31/12/2022). In order to respond more precisely to the needs expressed, 600 additional AEMO measures were implemented in 2023, and the offer of reception places continues to adapt, in terms of both organisation and capacity.

More generally, in a few years, there has been a sharp increase in the number of children in care: 5,372 minors and young adults in 2023 compared to 3,252 in 2016. This is a national trend, with the National Observatory of Social Action and *Départements de France* forecasting an increase in children's policy spending of 11% in 2024<sup>102</sup>, after +10.2% in 2023<sup>103</sup>.

The Département is a signatory to the Childhood Contract and provides 5.6 M€ for this purpose.

More generally, the Département is also a partner of the solidarity Pact (formerly the poverty plan) and implements for the benefit of its priority groups, all of the measures contained in the pact with a new goal of ecological transition based on solidarity.

- **Education/construction, environment/security** remain priorities with 166.4 M€ (+4%), of which 71.1 M€ for education and 95.3 M€ for the environment and security.

Among the education initiatives, note the continuance of actions undertaken in relation to energy transition with the renovation of school heating systems (14.9 M€) and digital schools (4.3 M€). These are two major challenges in terms of the battle against climate change and the digital divide.

<sup>102</sup> Source : Départements de France

<sup>103</sup> Source : ODAS, June 2024

Environment/security expenditure mainly comprises the contribution to the fire brigade's (SDIS) budget (77 M€). This also includes policy initiatives relating to sustainable development (protecting biodiversity). In 2022, the Département adopted a departmental strategy for biodiversity for the period 2022-2027, in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature. In addition to a survey and setting targets, the approach provides for concrete action sheets, and monitoring of measures. In late 2023, the Département adopted a low-carbon acceleration strategy with a view to achieving sobriety.

- **Other public policies** represent a budget of nearly 96 M€.

These include in particular culture (18.2 M€), sport (15.3 M€) and youth (13.1 M€). Note also an amount of 5.8 M€ allocated for agriculture and 4 M€ for tourism, two sectors facing significant changes (food security, short supply chains, organic farming, sensible and sustainable tourism).

- **General services** amount to 523.7 M€ (+5.9%). Human resources (up 5.6%, i.e. + 23.2 M€) accounted for 440 M€ and included severe constraints (increase in the index point, award of additional points, revision of SMIC on 1 January 2024, and Ségur Santé, which hamper conventional incompressible measures such as career progression or the compensation scheme) as well as the need to ensure, under good conditions, the performance of the public service (fight against insecure employment, attractiveness of positions).

Other structural expenses represented 83.7 M€ (+8%). These are areas subject to severe cost constraints (buildings, security). Otherwise, the items are being renewed.

- **Non-functional expenditure** represents 175.4 M€. In particular, it covers revenue mitigations related to equalisation and debt costs, directly related to movements in key interest rates. The latter doubled in 2023, from 18 to 36 M€. For 2024, 45.6 M€ is planned, with an additional 5 M€ entered in DM1.

## **B – Capital expenditure**

Capital expenditure (684.4 M€) is split between 110 M€ in debt repayment and 574.4 M€ for investment excluding debt. The net amount of PA equals 401.1 M€.

In accordance with the budgetary guidelines, this amount will be adjusted during the year 2024 (additions, reductions, cancellations, lapse of old PA).

Consistent with previous financial years and the local authority's priorities, the following policies should be highlighted: support for communes (192 M€), education (141 M€), mobility /roads (127.4 M€), environment and security (26 M€) or housing and town planning (25 M€).

- **Support for communes** (148.5 M€) regularly adapts to environmental and societal challenges, in particular with regard to the fight against climate change. In addition to specific tools ("Provence verte" which use natural resources to control heat) all schemes incorporate relevant recommendations: use of materials with low carbon footprint, energy performance, ground re-permeabilisation, green-spacing car parks or thermic renovation options. Regarding the forthcoming 2024 Olympic Games, particular attention was paid to developing sustainable sports facilities so that the entire population can enjoy them.

Finally, the Département presented the acceleration plan for ecological transition (PACTE). An innovative approach, the PACTE testifies to the willingness of all communes and inter-municipalities alongside the Département, to commit to accelerating the ecological transition of the region and collectively building a territory that is more energy-efficient, sustainable, virtuous, respectful of living things and fair, with 6 commitments (reducing energy consumption and development of energy

production; reducing water consumption and restoration of the water cycle; renaturing towns and eradicating urban hotspots; preservation of vulnerable natural spaces, biodiversity and landscapes; soft forms of mobility and low-emission transport; reviving the link between Man and Nature). New measures are planned, aimed at promoting water saving for both communes and individuals, energy transition through financing solar panels on public buildings and indeed fire prevention by fulfilling legal brush clearance obligations.

- The priority given to **education** is also confirmed with 120.3 M€ in payment credits that will enable an investment of 24 M€ in digitising schools.

- **Mobility** remains at the heart of the priorities, with 57.5 M€ for the mobility plan and 64.1 M€ for roads, with an additional 5 M€ for the cycle paths programme, with the continuation of two operations and the launch of six new routes. Between 2015 and 2023, 44 sections were completed over 79 km. For their part, financed road operations are aimed in particular at improving road safety and the road network.

- **Housing/town policy** represents an amount of 21.3 M€ under which the “Provence éco rénov” (6.2M€) programme will be pursued with the aim of improving the home energy performance. In 2023, 2,246 grants were awarded, generating 32 M€ in thermal renovation work.

In addition, 971 grants totalling nearly one million euros were awarded to individuals for the replacement of wood-burning heating equipment with more efficient and less polluting equipment, Also in 2023, the Département supported the construction of 299 social housing units, and the renovation of 1,033 housing units, resulting in an overall investment of more than 91.2 M€.

Added to these figures are landlord construction or renovation initiatives made possible thanks to a guaranteed loan from the Département.

- Planned **solidarity** expenditure (7.3 M€) will be used to finance the quality and comfort of accommodation establishments, and expenditure for public health, to provide support for the development of medical technologies, and to improve user care (restructuring of the Salon and Arles hospitals, departmental geriatrics centre) and the working conditions of caregivers.

- Finally, **general services** (84 M€) will ensure the quality of the services provided to the general public (in particular through building acquisitions and maintenance) and of the daily lives of staff.

- **Non-functional expenditure** amounts to 111.2 M€ which does not call for any particular comment. Debt repayment (110 M€) is consistent with changes in the outstanding balance.

Following the DM2 2022, total PA stock amounted to 6,528 M€ of which 1.9 Bn€ have yet to be financed (the average life of PA stock is less than 4 years). With the PA under the PB 2024, the stock will be increased to 6,929 M€. Given the mid-year adjustments and consumption forecasts, the amount remaining to be financed should stabilise at 2 Bn€ by the end of 2024, namely less than 4 years of investment and a constant volume.

### Projected programme authorisation stock (in M€)

	2023	2024	2025
<b>Amount remaining to be financed (beginning of year)</b>	2 040.6	1 892	1 843.4
PA opened	322.4	401.4	400
PA funding credits (CP) consumed	471	450	450
<b>Remaining to be financed (year-end)</b>	1 892	1 843.4	1 793.4

### III – Budget balance position

#### A – Gross operating surplus

Gross operating surplus in the strict sense (surplus of operating revenue over expenditure) amounts to 140 M€, compared to 226 M€ in the PB 2023 (all transactions included, including carry-forwards and re-incorporations and results). The sharp downturn in the real estate market resulted in the equally steep fall in DMTO. After an exceptional year in 2022, DMTO fell by 22%, almost identical to what other départements experienced.

Combined with the unavoidable nature of the large majority of expenditure (more than 60% of the operating budget is earmarked for social spending) and the increase in certain items such as debt interest dependent on fluctuations in key rates, this change in revenues has led to a sharp drop in the operating surplus, from 404 M€ to 209 M€ at the end of 2023 (214.3 M€ including disposals).

As of 31 December 2023, the Département's outstanding debt was 1,933 M€, or a solvency ratio of 9.2 years compared to 4.4 at the end of 2022. This deterioration has been seen in other départements, where the average solvency ratio has risen from 2.6 years to 4.2 years, or nearly double<sup>104</sup>. The repayment capacity of one million plus inhabitant départements has increased from 3 to 5.7 years, again almost doubling<sup>105</sup>. As a reminder, in the previous public finance programming law, a 10-year solvency ceiling was imposed on départements.

Taking into account cash receipts (320 M€) and disbursements (114 M€) envisaged in 2024, the debt stock should be around 2.1 billion euros at the end of 2024. The rating agency Fitch Ratings noted in its press release of 31 May 2024 that solvency is expected to be greater than 9 years by 2028.

USE OF DEBT					
Data (in M€)	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Debt stock as of 01/01/N</b>	<b>1 661</b>	<b>1 784</b>	<b>1 933</b>	<b>2 139</b>	<b>2 262</b>
New debt	218	242	320	250	250
Debt repayments	95	93	114	127	133
<b>Debt stock as of 31/12/N</b>	<b>1 784</b>	<b>1 933</b>	<b>2 139</b>	<b>2 262</b>	<b>2 379</b>
<b>Borrowing requirement</b>	123	149	206	123	117
<b>Indebtedness/inhabitant (in Euros)</b>	873	933	1 040	1 083	1 123
<b>Solvency non-restated (in years)</b>	4.4	9.2	11.9	11.3	11.9

<sup>104</sup> Source : OFGPL report, June 2024

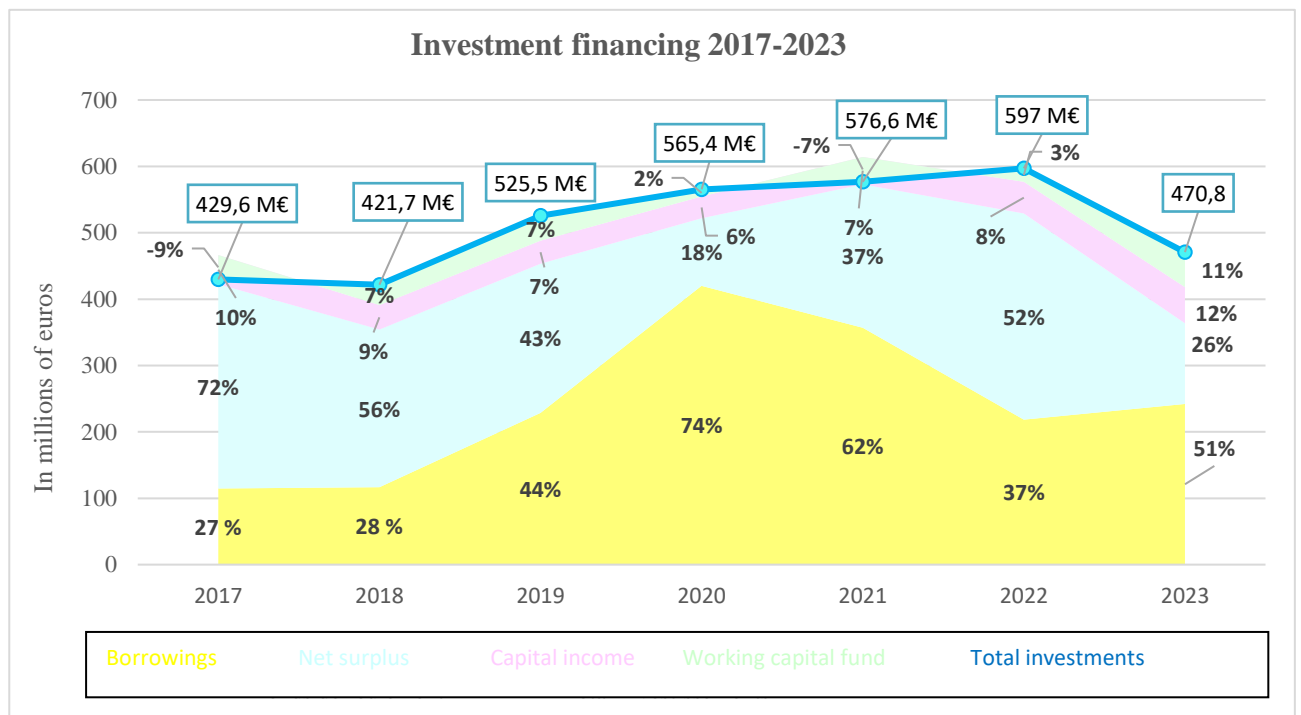
<sup>105</sup> Source : DGFIP



## B – Investment capacity and balancing borrowing

With capital income (55.2 M€) and balancing borrowings, the Département is able to finance investment to the tune of 574.4 M€. However, given the realisation rate for potential expenditure and revenue, the 2024 borrowing requirement is estimated at between 240 and 320 M€.

On 16 July 2024, the Département has already incurred 288.2 M€ in borrowing, 34 M€ in the form of bonds and 254.2 M€ in bank loans. Two issues were made, in amounts of 4 M€ and 30 M€, with maturities adapted to the extinction profile of the Département's debt. A banking campaign, conducted in the spring, concluded with the selection of five envelopes, totalling 116.2 M€. An "ecological transformation" loan was entered into and drawn down with the Banque des Territoires, for 80 M€. Finally, two partnerships with the European Investment Bank (EIB) have been released, one devoted to the Cité scolaire internationale de Marseille for 18 M€, and the second, linked to the Charlemagne Education Plan, for 40 M€. A third EIB partnership (combating global warming) for 25 M€ should be utilised before the end of the year. It relates to the building of fire service (SDIS) barracks and a unit of forest fire fighters who help to protect woodlands and prevent forest fires.



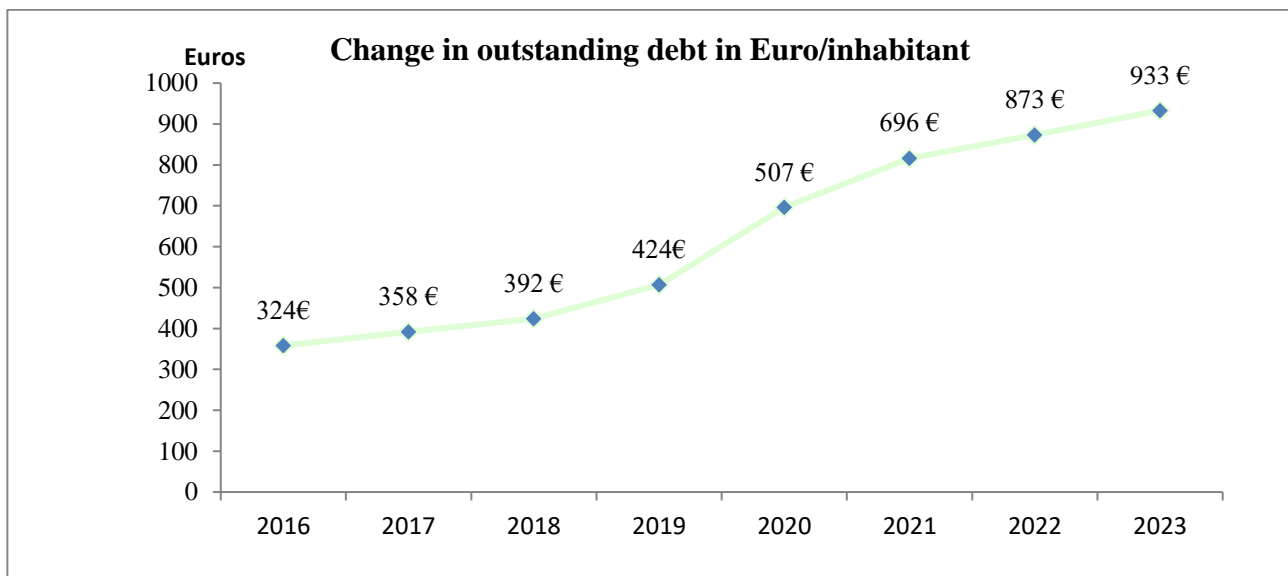
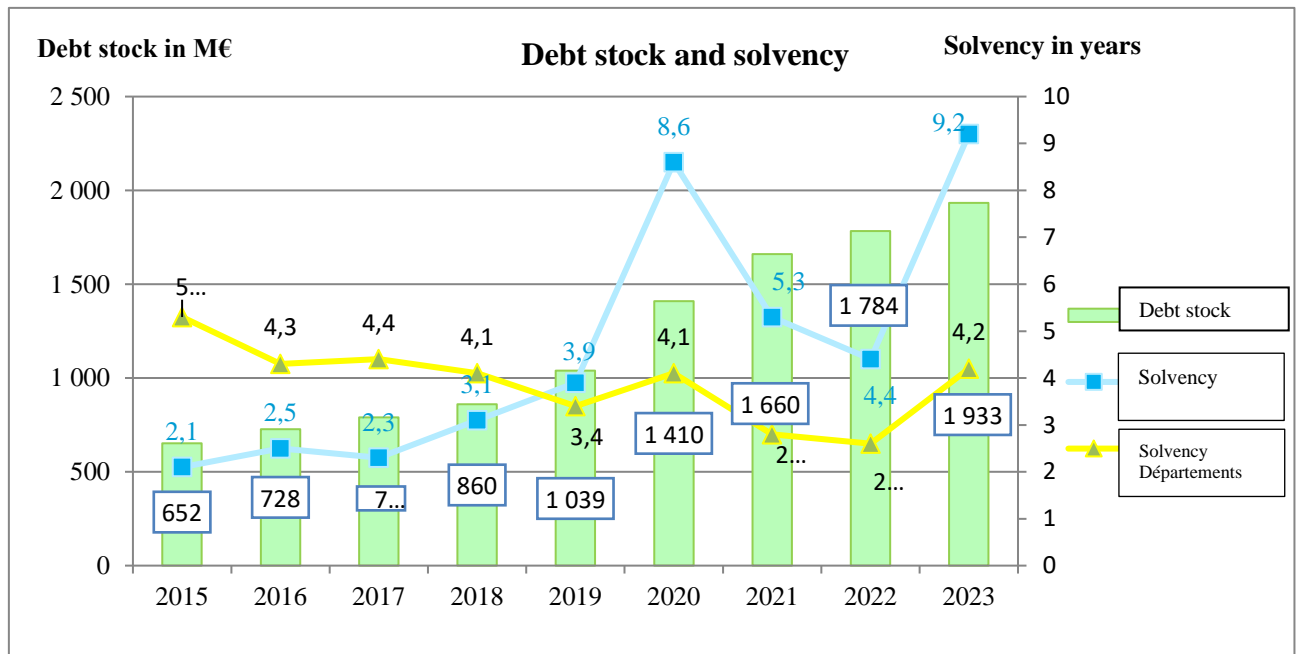
For the record, in the 2017 financial year, the working capital fund was increased by 36.7 M€. In 2021, working capital consolidated further by 38 M€. At the end of 2023, it stood at 8 M€.

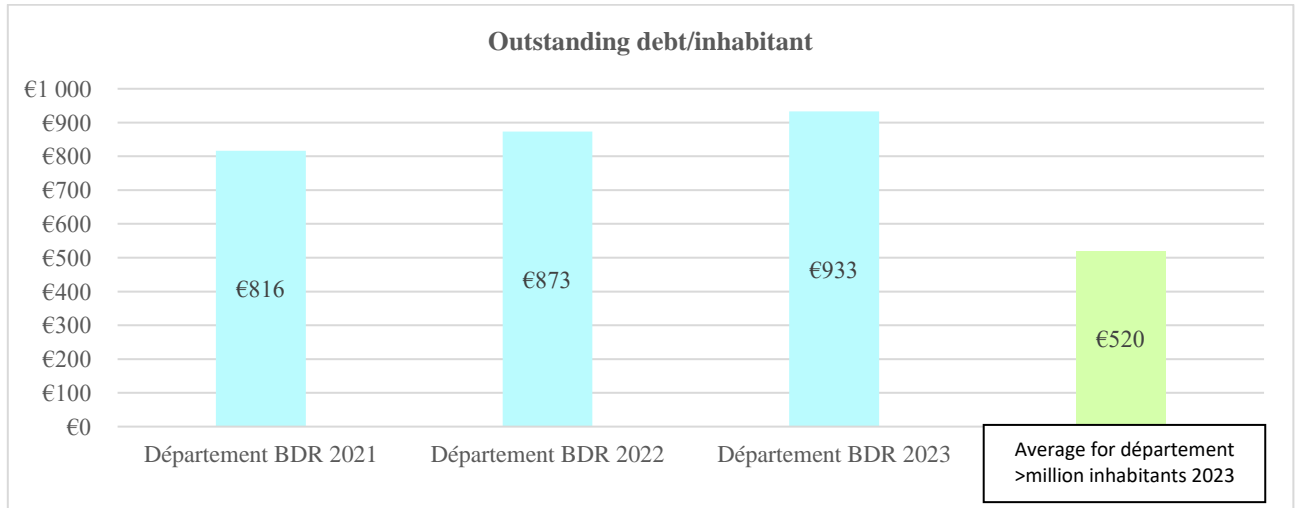
## C – Debt and cash flow

### Outstanding debt heavily impacted by the decrease in operating surplus

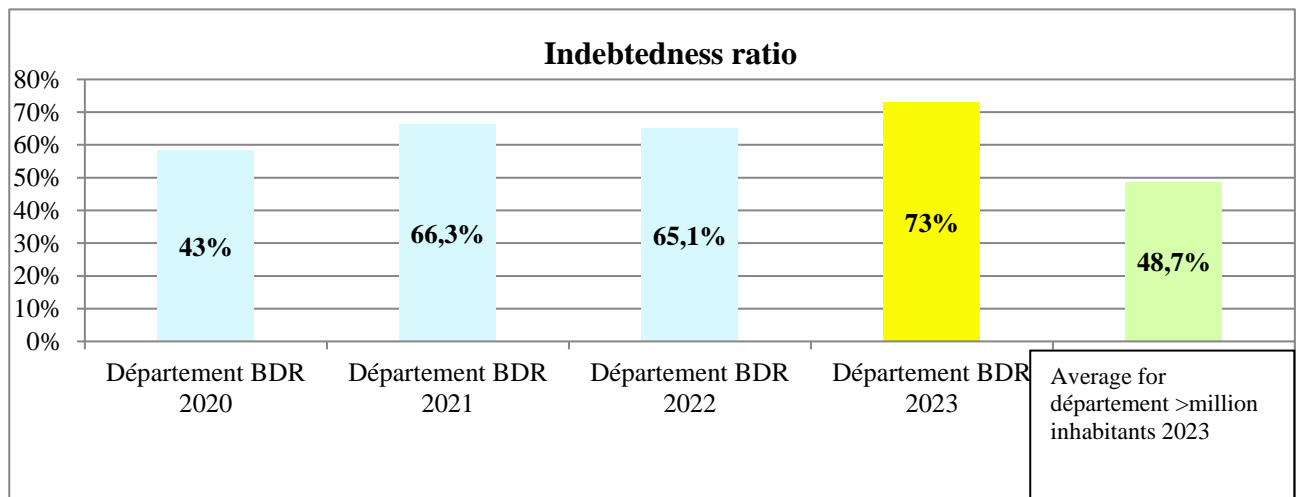
At the end of 2024, the debt stock is expected to be around 2,100 M€, i.e. a solvency of 11.9 years. Per capita debt will be 1,040 €.

In the financial year 2024, an amount of 114 M€ in principal will be repaid and 50.6 M€ in interest (estimated after DM1 2024) will be paid, which is an annual total of 164.6 M€.





**The indebtedness ratio**, which is the ratio of outstanding debt to actual operating income, measures the debt burden of a local authority compared to its wealth. The Département's indebtedness ratio is progressing without however oscillating to any great extent, the increase seen in 2023 being associated with the fall in DMTO revenue.



Excluding repayable advances

Outstanding debt at 31 December 2023 is made up of 144 contracts, all classified as 1-A.

Debt is split evenly between fixed rate (55%) and floating rate (45%).

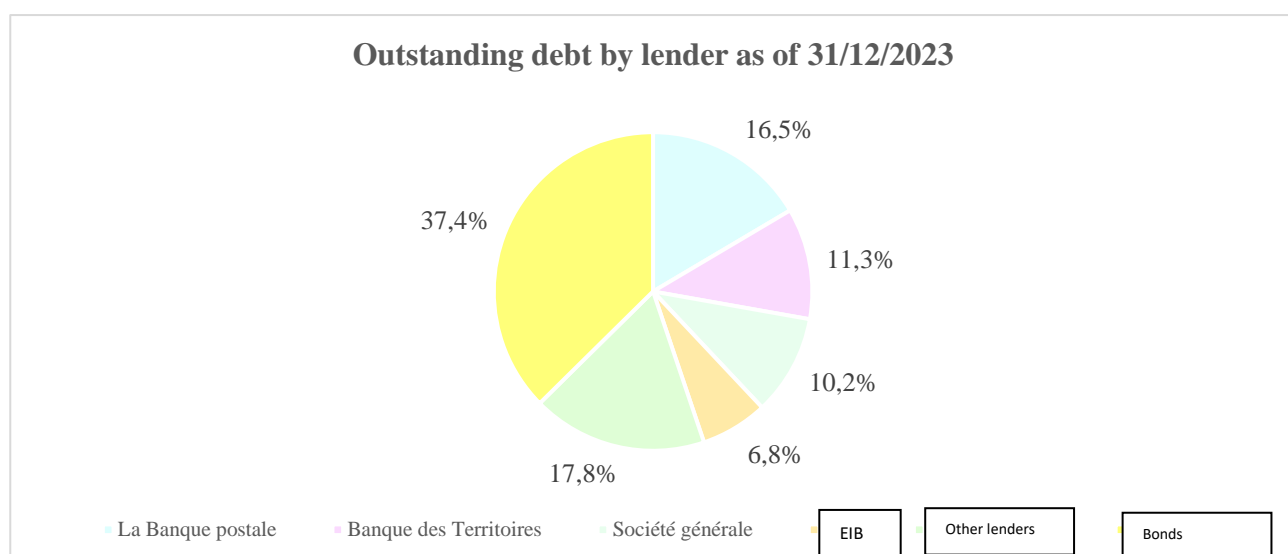
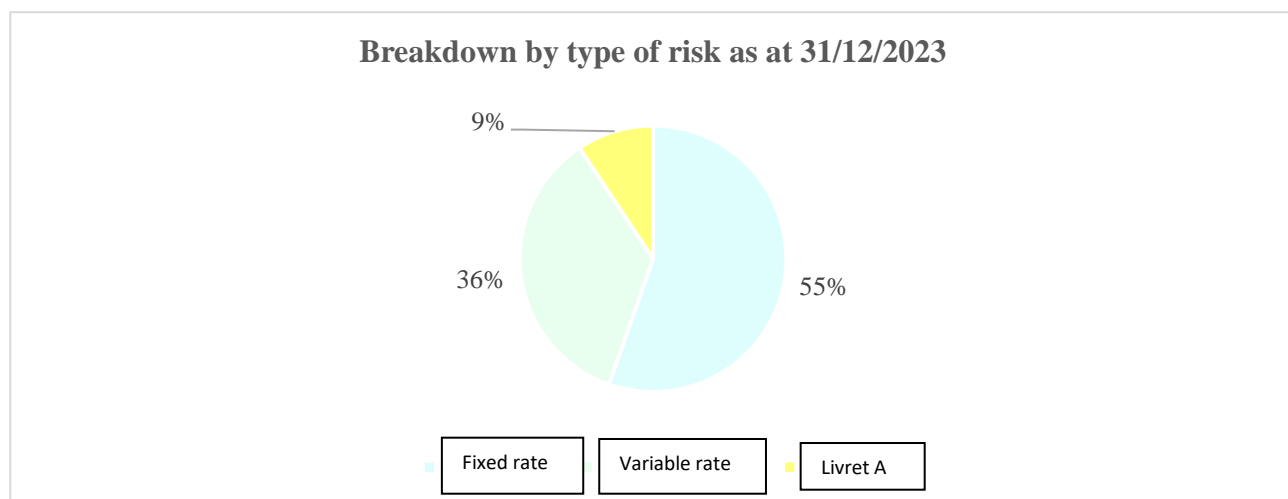
Outstanding debt is split amongst bank loans, 63%, and bond debt, 37% and its average life is 9 years and 10 months.

Diversification is an important issue in the balance of the debt and the Département strives to maintain the relationships established with recent partners such as La Nef, La Banque Franco-Allemande/SAAR and CEPAC.

The 2023 financial year presented an opportunity to renew contact with the Banque des Territoires, and the discussions concluded with the securing of an 80 M€ "ecological transformation" loan envelope, that was released in 2024.

A new partnership has been established with the EIB for the Euromditerranée cité scolaire internationale, a pilot school establishment of international ambition, that will open its doors at the start of the 2024 academic year. The Département has secured and received 18 M€.

Finally, a new contract was signed on 25 June 2024, concerning a soft mobility project. An amount of 60 M€ in financing was secured which should be made available in 2025.



**An average rate whose steady decline was abruptly interrupted by the market recovery as from 2022**

As at 31/12/2021, the average interest rate on outstanding debt was 0.95%. It rose to 1.48% by 31/12/2022, then to 2.45% by 31/12/2023. It is expected to fall back to 2.35% by the end of 2024<sup>106</sup>.

Like the other local authorities (average rate of the départements as of 31/12/2023 according to Active Finance: 2.80% against 2.17% the previous year), the Département encountered the rise in indices,

<sup>106</sup> Source : Finance active 22/07/2024

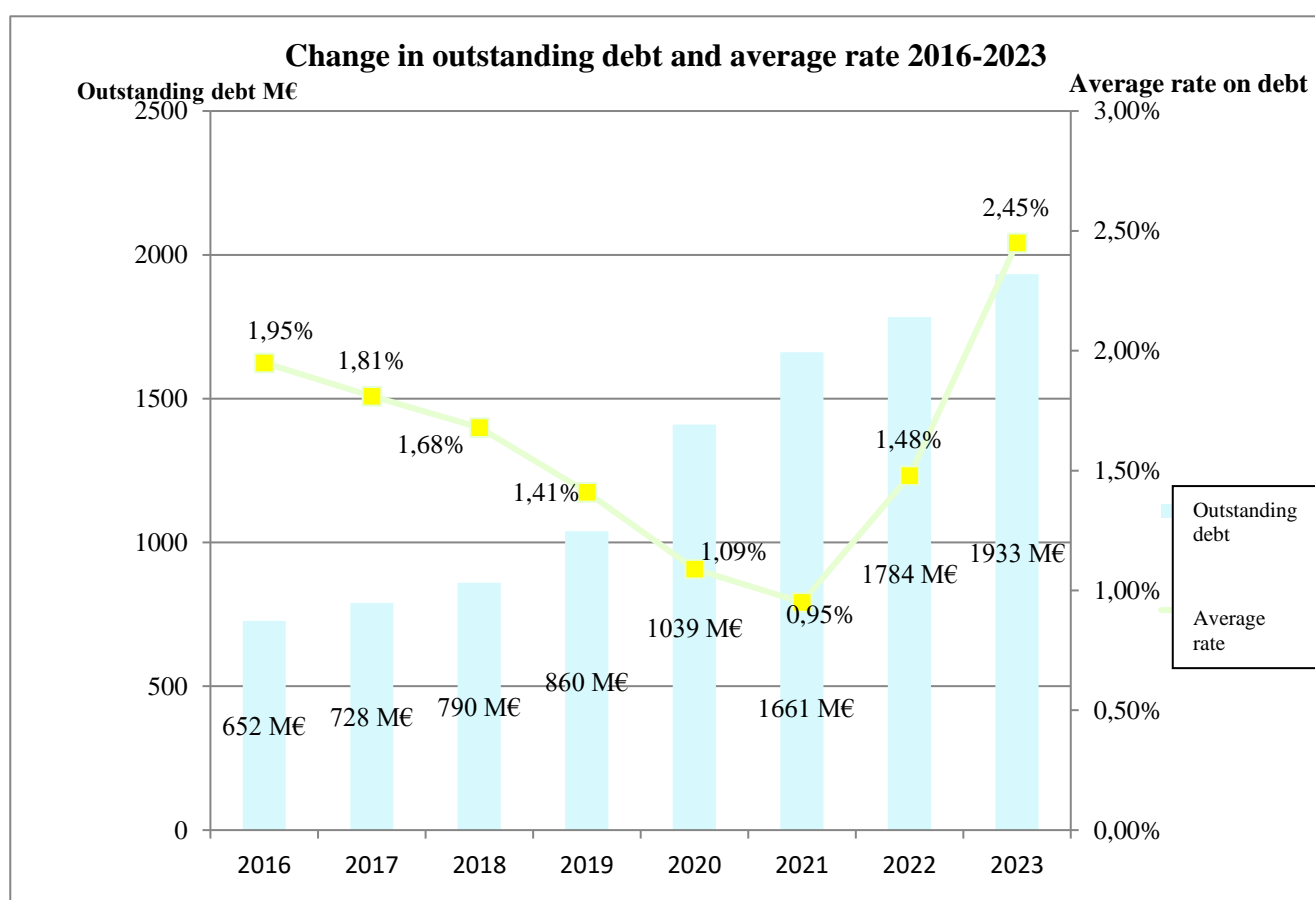
Livret A (from 0.5% in February 2022 to 3% in February 2023) and more generally, the rise in key rates practised by the ECB.

However, the Issuer has outstanding several zero rate facilities entered into with the Banque des Territoires. Finally, it launched four bond issues (between 2020 and 2022) at 0%.

Furthermore, the Issuer pursues an active debt management policy. Each year, with the support of its financial advisers, the Département analyses its outstanding debt and strives to renegotiate agreements where this is possible without prohibitive costs.

More generally, the Issuer closely monitors any movement in interest rates and financing terms offered in the bank and bond markets. This is an important selection criterion.

It has also become an issue for the release date of loans which must be adapted optimally to needs in order to limit costs. In the event of a one-off need, cash drawdown is preferred.



### Debt repayment plan

The average residual life of debt is expressed in numbers of years. It measures the remaining term of the outstanding loans weighed by the amounts outstanding under each loan.

The average residual life of the Département's debt on 31 December 2023 was 14 years and 4 months. This duration is tending to increase slightly with increases in outstanding debt, and recently, with new borrowings of longer duration sought in recent years, in order to avoid any repayment spikes and, if appropriate, take advantage of attractive terms for as long as possible.

It is now settling down, or indeed decreasing slightly (15 years and 4 months as of 31 December 2022) with the borrowings made in 2023, which are once again shorter in duration given their worsening terms (15 years rather than 20 or 25 years).

### **Cash flow management strategy**

The Département prepares an annual cash flow plan and monitors cash flow on a weekly basis, in addition to a monthly cash flow status report. It has daily contact with the departmental Paymaster and constantly updated monitoring tools.

At 31 December 2023, the cash balance was 64 M€.

The Issuer has 3 cash lines totalling 105 M€, renewed in the spring of 2024 for a term of one year.

In 2023, the use of the cash lines involved twenty drawings, in amounts varying between 1.3 and 25 M€ and terms of 1 to 17 days.

As of 16 July 2024, the Issuer has made twenty-one drawdowns, of between 800 K€ and 20 M€, with terms of between one and nineteen days, to meet specific needs. Given the cost of the loans, the Issuer prefers the drawdown of the lines to a premature release of the loans.

As a reminder, the Issuer has a Neu CP program of 150 M€ operational since June 30, 2021 intended to streamline and secure cash flow. It is rated F1+ by the Fitch Ratings agency. In agreement with Fitch Ratings, the back-up is assessed by reference to cash credit lines and the daily cash balance.

Ten issues were made in 2021, for a total amount of 500 M€, generating 348 K€ in financial income. In 2022, seventeen issues have been made, for an amount of 565M€ and financial gain of 291 K€. They were stopped in July, in view of the rise in rates. No operations took place in 2023, nor in the first half of 2024.

However, it is a worthwhile alternative to cash lines and the Département ensures that the programme is kept operational, updating it when necessary under the authority of the Banque de France. The last update was made on 19 July 2024.

### **Summary of the Issuer's indebtedness with a residual term of less than one year**

The amounts of principal to be repaid in 2024 is estimated at 114 M€. Two bond issues, negotiated with TPICAP and GFI, matured in the first half of the year: they were redeemed in amounts of 4 and 10 M€ respectively. A bank loan of 10 M€ entered into with La Banque Postale will also be paid off in 2024.

### **Currency of the Issuer's debt**

All of the Département's debt is denominated in euros.

### **D - Loan guarantees provided by the Département**

The Council of the Département des Bouches-du-Rhône is a major participant in social housing policy within its territory through the financial support it provides to public and private organisations for all sorts of acquisition, construction or renovation projects.

It assists sponsors, such as the public housing offices (*Offices Publics de l'Habitat* - OPH) and in particular 13 Habitat, its operator, Housing Association private companies (*Sociétés Anonymes d'Habitat à Loyer Modéré* - SA d'HLM) or other organisations, providing them with the necessary guarantee for financing of their acquisition, construction or renovation of social housing or meeting

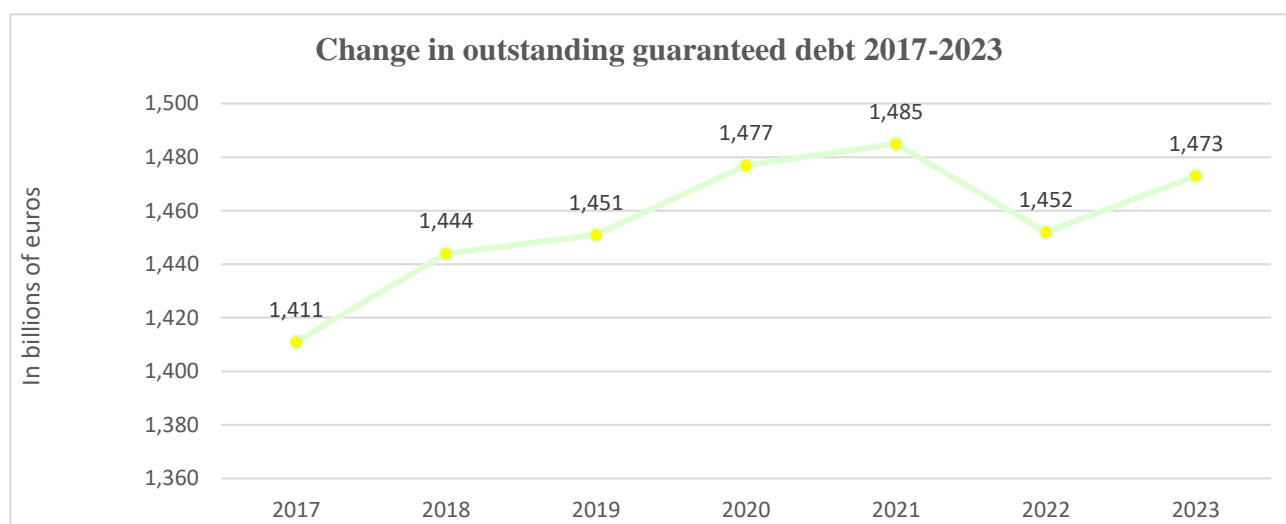
the priorities of the Département's housing policy (technical advice from the relevant departments is systematically requested).

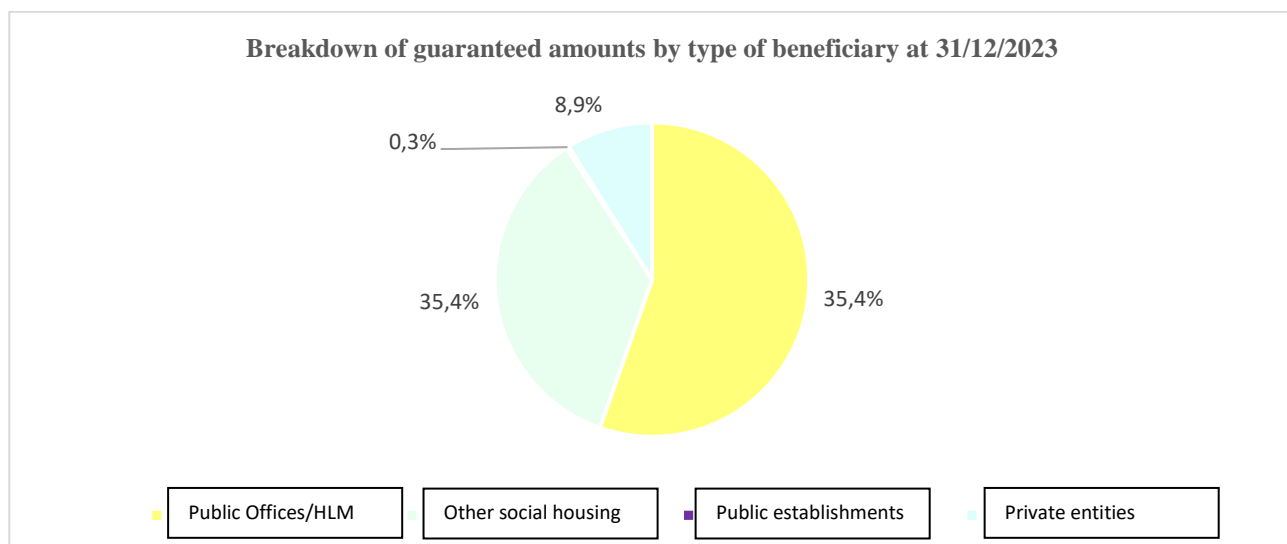
The Département's engagement enables these organisations to minimise the financing costs of these operations, whilst helping to expand the offer of rental properties to address the severe shortfall. Its intervention is coordinated with that of the Métropole Aix-Marseille-Provence in order to enhance and increase efficiency.

In direct relation to its powers in matters of solidarity and education, the Département also guarantees the financing of the construction or renovation of specialised centres (for children, the elderly, those with disabilities or health problems or for those needing social services support) or educational institutions (OGEC).

Each guaranteed organisation is subject to an annual financial analysis (based on its definitive accounts), following which it receives a score denoting its risk level.

As of 31 December 2023, the outstanding amount of guaranteed debt totalled 1,473 M€, including 91% for social housing. The guaranteed debt of 13 Habitat amounts to 816 M€.





### Setting aside of provisions

In order to respect the observations of the *Chambre Régionale des Comptes*, provisioning for financial risk is now restricted to entities presenting an established risk.

The Département nevertheless analyses the accounts and calculates the management, structure and debt ratios of the guaranteed bodies as well as those falling within the legal scope of consolidation of the accounts (ancillary budgets), thus exercising a monitoring function.

Furthermore, the following provisions have been made:

- hedging of the risk of non-recovery of various receivables, including RMI/RSA (20.2 M€),
- commencement and settlement of disputes and litigation (8.3 M€),
- impairment of financial assets and tangible assets (6.6 M€),
- coverage of budgetary risk relating to the use of time savings accounts (CET) (6.6 M€),
- coverage of budgetary risk relating to the allocation for back to work schemes (1 M€),
- non-recovery of amounts owed by Departmental analysis laboratory debtors (12 K€).

The total provisions after DM1 2024 is 42.9 M€.



## SUBSCRIPTION AND SALE

Subject to the terms and conditions contained in a French language dealer agreement dated 10 October 2024 entered into between the Issuer, the Permanent Dealers and the Arranger (the **Dealer Agreement**), the Notes will be offered by the Issuer to the Permanent Dealers. However, the Issuer reserves the right to sell Notes directly on its own behalf to Dealers that are not Permanent Dealers. The Notes may be resold at prevailing market prices, or at prices related thereto, at the time of such resale, as determined by the relevant Dealer. The Notes may also be sold by the Issuer through the Dealers, acting as agents of the Issuer. The Dealer Agreement also provides for Notes to be issued in syndicated Tranches that are jointly and severally underwritten by two or more Dealers.

The Issuer will pay each relevant Dealer a commission as agreed between themselves in respect of Notes subscribed by such Dealer. If appropriate, the commissions in respect of an issue of Notes on a syndicated basis will be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. The Issuer has agreed to reimburse the Arranger for the expenses incurred by them in connection with the updating of the Programme and the Dealers for certain expenses in relation to their role under this Programme.

The Issuer has agreed to indemnify the Dealers against certain types of liability they may incur in connection with the offer and sale of Notes. The Dealers have undertaken to indemnify the Issuer against certain types of liability it may incur in connection with the offer and sale of Notes. The Dealer Agreement entitles the Dealers, under certain circumstances, to terminate any agreement they may enter into for the subscription of Notes prior to payment for such Notes being made to the Issuer.

### 1. GENERAL

These selling restrictions may be amended by mutual agreement between the Issuer and the Dealers in particular following any change to any applicable law, regulation or directive. Each Dealer has undertaken to comply, to the fullest extent of the information in its possession, with all relevant laws, regulations and directives in each country in which it buys, offers, sells or delivers Notes or in which it holds or distributes the Offering Circular, any other offer document or any Pricing Supplement and neither the Issuer nor any of the other Dealers shall incur any liability in respect thereof.

### 2. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Notes have not and will not be registered pursuant to the United States Securities Act of 1933 as amended (the **US Securities Act**) nor by any regulatory authority in respect of securities of any state or other jurisdiction of the United States of America. Subject to certain exceptions, Notes may not be offered or sold in the territory of the United States of America or, in the case of Materialised Notes, offered, sold or delivered in the territory of the United States of America. Each Dealer has undertaken and each new Dealer will be required to undertake, not to offer or sell any Note, or in the case of Dematerialised Notes, to deliver such Notes in the territory of the United States of America except in compliance with the Dealer Agreement.

Bearer Materialised Notes with a maturity of greater than one year are subject to US tax rules and may not be offered, sold or delivered in the territory of the United States of America or any of its possessions or to U.S. Persons, with the exception of certain transactions which are permitted under US tax laws. Terms used in this paragraph shall have the meaning given to them in the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and regulations made thereunder.

In addition, the offering or sale by any Dealer (whether or not participating in the offering) of any identifiable tranche of any Notes within the United States of America within the first forty (40) calendar days after the later of the date of commencement of the offering of the identified tranche or the date of settlement, may violate the registration requirements under the US Securities Act.

### 3. UNITED KINGDOM

Each Dealer has represented and agreed and each new Dealer will be required to represent and agree that:

- (a) in relation to any Notes having a maturity of less than one year, (i) it is a person whose ordinary activities involve acquiring, holding, managing or selling financial products (as principal or agent) for the purposes of its business and (ii) it has not offered or sold and will not offer or sell any Notes to persons in the United Kingdom, other than to persons whose ordinary activities involve acquiring, holding, managing or selling financial products (as principal or agent) for the purposes of their business or to persons who may reasonably be expected to acquire, hold, manage or sell financial products (as principal or agent) for the purposes of their business, where the issue of the Notes would otherwise constitute a violation of Section 19 of the FSMA;
- (b) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of any Notes in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not and will not apply to the Issuer; and
- (c) it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to any Notes in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

### 4. ITALY

The offering of Notes has not been registered in accordance with Italian securities laws and, accordingly, the Notes may not be, and shall not be, offered, sold or delivered in the Republic of Italy, and no copy of this Offering Circular, or any other document relating to the Notes may be, nor shall be, distributed in the Republic of Italy, except in any circumstance falling outside the scope of, or benefitting from an exemption under, the regulations applicable to public offers in accordance with Article 1 of Regulation (EU) n°2017/1129 as amended (the **Prospectus Regulation**), Article 34-ter of CONSOB Regulation n°11971 of 14 May 1999, as amended from time to time, and all applicable Italian laws.

Any offer, sale or delivery of Notes or any distribution of a copy of this Offering Circular or any other document relating to the Notes in the Republic of Italy in the circumstances described above must be:

- (a) made by an investment firm, bank or financial intermediary authorised to conduct such activities in the Republic of Italy in accordance with the Legislative Decree no. 58 dated 24 February 1998, as amended from time to time, with CONSOB Regulation No. 20307 of 15 February 2018, as amended from time to time, and legislative decree No. 385 of 1 September 1993, as amended from time to time (the **Banking Act**); and
- (b) in compliance with all other laws and regulations or requirements imposed by the CONSOB, the Bank of Italy (including all disclosure requirements, if applicable, under Article 129 of the Banking Act and the guidelines of the Bank of Italy, as amended from time to time) or by any other Italian authority.

## **5. FRANCE**

Each of the Dealers and the Issuer has represented and agreed that it undertakes to comply with all current laws and regulations applicable in France in relation to the offering, placement or sale of Notes and the distribution in France of the Offering Circular and any other documents relating to the Notes.

## FORM OF PRICING SUPPLEMENT

Set out below is the Form of Pricing Supplement which will be completed for each Tranche of Notes:

**MiFID II Product Governance / Target Market: eligible counterparties and professional clients only** – Solely for the purposes of the product approval process of [the/each] manufacturer, the target market assessment in respect of the Notes, taking into consideration the 5 categories referred to in paragraph 19 of the Guidelines published by the European Securities and Markets Authority on 3 August 2023, has led to the conclusion that: (i) the target market for the Notes includes eligible counterparties and professional clients only, each as defined in Directive 2014/65/EU (as amended, **MiFID II**) and (ii) all channels for distribution of the Notes to eligible counterparties and professional clients are appropriate. Any person who subsequently offers, sells or recommends the Notes (a **distributor**) should take into consideration the [the/each] manufacturer’s target market assessment. However, a distributor subject to MiFID II is responsible for undertaking its own target market assessment in respect of the Notes (and either adopting or refining [the/each] manufacturer’s target market assessment) and determining the appropriate distribution channels.

<sup>107</sup>[**United Kingdom MiFIR Product Governance / Target Market: eligible counterparties and professional clients only** - Solely for the purposes of the product approval process of [the/each] manufacturer, the target market assessment in respect of the Notes, has led to the conclusion that: (i) the target market for the Notes is limited to eligible counterparties, as defined in the United Kingdom Financial Conduct Authority’s *FCA Handbook - Conduct of Business Sourcebook (COBS)*, and professional clients, as defined in Regulation (EU) no. 600/2014 which forms part of United Kingdom domestic law in accordance with the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (**UK MiFIR**); and (ii) all channels for distribution of the Notes to eligible counterparties or professional clients are appropriate. Any person subsequently offering, selling or recommending the Notes (a **distributor**) should take [the/each] manufacturer’s target market assessment into consideration. However, a distributor bound by the United Kingdom Financial Conduct Authority’s *FCA Handbook - Product Intervention and Product Governance Sourcebook* (the **United Kingdom MiFIR Product Governance Rules**) is responsible for undertaking its own target market assessment in respect of the Notes (by either adopting or refining [the/each] manufacturer’s target market assessment) and determining the appropriate distribution channels.]

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<sup>107</sup> Include this legend on the cover of the Pricing Supplement if a Dealer is subject to the UK MiFIR.

**Pricing Supplement dated [●]**



**DÉPARTEMENT DES BOUCHES-DU-RHÔNE**

**Legal Entity Identifier (LEI): 969500DMKVFI7KGA5F92**

Euro Medium Term Note Programme  
€1,000,000,000

*[Brief description and aggregate nominal amount of Notes]*

**SERIES No: [●]**

**TRANCHE No: [●]**

Issue Price: [●]%

**[Name(s) of Dealer(s)]**

## PART 1

### CONTRACTUAL TERMS

This document constitutes the Pricing Supplement in respect of the issue of notes described below (the **Notes**) and contains the final terms of the Notes. This Pricing Supplement completes the offering circular dated 10 October 2024 [and the supplement to the offering circular dated [●]] relating to the 1,000,000,000 Euro Medium Term Note Programme of the Issuer which [together] constitute[s] an offering circular (the **Offering Circular**) and must be read in conjunction therewith. Terms used below shall have the meaning given to them in the Offering Circular. The Notes shall be issued in accordance with the conditions of this Pricing Supplement together with the Offering Circular. The Issuer accepts responsibility for the information contained in this Pricing Supplement which, together with the Offering Circular, contain all material information in connection with the issue of the Notes. Full information on the Issuer and the offer of Notes is available solely on the combined basis of this Pricing Supplement and the Offering Circular. The Pricing Supplement and the Offering Circular are available on the dedicated page of the Issuer's website (<https://www.departement13.fr/le-departement/linstitution/le-budget/lemprunt-obligataire/>). [The Offering Circular is also available [on/at] [●].]<sup>108</sup>

*[The following language applies if the first Tranche of an issue which is being increased was issued under a prospectus or offering circular with an earlier date.]*

Terms used below shall be deemed to have been defined for the purposes of the [2013 Conditions of the Notes / 2014 Conditions of the Notes / 2015 Conditions of the Notes / 2016 Conditions of the Notes/ 2018 Conditions of the Notes/ 2019 Conditions of the Notes/ 2020 Conditions of the Notes/2021 Conditions of the Notes/2022 Conditions of the Notes/2023 Conditions of the Notes] incorporated by reference in the offering circular dated 10 October 2024 [and in the supplemental offering circular dated [●]] relating to the 1,000,000,000 Euro Medium Term Note Programme of the Issuer] which [together] constitute[s] an offering circular (the **Offering Circular**). This document constitutes the Pricing Supplement relating to the issue of the Notes hereinafter described and should be read together with the Offering Circular, with the exception of the Conditions of the Notes which are replaced by the [2013 Conditions of the Notes / 2014 Conditions of the Notes / 2015 Conditions of the Notes / 2016 Conditions of the Notes /2018 Conditions of the Notes/2019 Conditions of the Notes/ 2020 Conditions of the Notes/2021 Conditions of the Notes/2022 Conditions of the Notes/2023 Conditions of the Notes]. The Notes shall be issued in accordance with the conditions of this Pricing Supplement together with the Offering Circular. Full information on the Issuer and the offer of Notes is available solely on the combined basis of this Pricing Supplement and the Offering Circular. The Pricing Supplement and the Offering Circular are available on the dedicated page of the Issuer's website (<https://www.departement13.fr/le-departement/linstitution/le-budget/lemprunt-obligataire/>). [Furthermore, the Pricing Supplement and the Offering Circular are available [on/at] [●].]<sup>109</sup>

*[Include whichever of the following apply or specify as "Not Applicable" (N/A). Note that the numbering should remain as set out below, even if "Not Applicable" is indicated for individual paragraphs or sub-paragraphs. Italics denote directions for completing the Pricing Supplement.]*

- |    |                |                                  |
|----|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | <b>Issuer:</b> | Département des Bouches-du-Rhône |
| 2. | (a) Series:    | [●]                              |
|    | (b) Tranche:   | [●]                              |

<sup>108</sup> If the Notes are admitted to trading on a Regulated Market other than Euronext Paris.

<sup>109</sup> If the Notes are admitted to trading on a Regulated Market other than Euronext Paris.

- (c) Date on which the Notes will be consolidated and form a single Series: [The Notes shall[, upon admission to trading,] be consolidated (*assimilable*) and form a single Series with [*describe the relevant Series*] issued by the Issuer on [*insert the relevant date*] (the "**Existing Titles**") as of [*insert the relevant date*]].] / [Not Applicable]
3. **Specified Currency:** Euro (€)
4. **Aggregate Nominal Amount:**
- (a) Series: [●]
- [(b) Tranche: [●]]
5. **Issue Price:** [●]% of the Aggregate Nominal Amount [plus accrued interest since [*insert the date*] (*in case of fungible issues or first broken coupon, if any*)]
6. **Specified Denomination(s):** [●] (*only one Denomination for Dematerialised Notes*) (100,000 € minimum)
7. (a) Issue Date: [●]
- (b) Interest Period Commencement Date: [●] [*Specify / Issue Date / Not Applicable*]
8. **Maturity Date:** [*Specify the date or (for the Floating Rate Notes) the Coupon Payment Date of the relevant month and year or the nearest date from the Coupon Payment Date of the relevant month and year*]
9. **Interest Basis:** [Fixed Rate of [●]%] [EURIBOR][TEC10] +/- [●]% of the Floating Rate] [Zero Coupon Note] (other details indicated below)
10. **Redemption/Payment Basis:** Subject to repurchase and cancellation or anticipated redemption, the Notes will be redeemed at the Maturity Date at [100]/[●]% of their nominal amount.
- [Redemption by Instalments]
11. **Change of Interest Basis:** [Applicable (*other details as specified below*) (*for Fixed/Floating Rate Notes*)/Not Applicable]
12. **Redemption at the option of the Issuer/Noteholders:** [Redemption at the option of the Issuer]/[Redemption at the option of the Noteholders][Not applicable] [(*other details indicated below*)]
13. (a) Status of the Notes: Senior

(b) Authorisation date for the issue of the Notes: [●]

14. **Distribution Method:** [Syndicated/Non-syndicated]

#### PROVISIONS RELATED TO INTEREST (IF ANY) TO BE PAID

15. **Provisions related to the Fixed Rate Notes:** [Applicable/Not Applicable]

(If this paragraph is not applicable, delete other sub-paragraphs)

(a) Interest Rate: [●]% per year [payable [annually/half-yearly/quarterly/monthly/other (*specify*)] at maturity]

(b) Coupon Payment Date(s): [●] in each year [adjusted in accordance with [*specify Business Day Convention and any relevant Business Centre(s) for the "Business Day" definition*]/not adjusted]

(c) Fixed Coupon Amount[(s)]: [●] per Specified Denomination of [●]

(d) Broken Amount[(s)]: [*Include information relating to the initial or final Broken Amount which are different to the Fixed Coupon Amount(s) and Interest Payment Date(s) to which they relate*][Not Applicable]

(e) Day Count Fraction (Article 4.1): [Actual/365 / Actual/365-FBF / Actual/Actual-[ICMA/FBF] / Actual/365 (Fixed) / Actual/360 / 30/360 / 360/360 / Bond Basis / 30/360 FBF / Actual 30A/360 (American Bond Basis).]

(f) Determination Date(s) (Article 4.1): [●] in each year (*specify the regular Coupon payment dates, excluding the Issue Date and the Maturity Date in the case of a first or last long or short Coupon.*)[Not Applicable]

*Note: only applicable where the Day Count Fraction is Actual/Actual (ICMA) Basis.*

16. **Provisions relating to Floating Rate Notes:** [Applicable/Not Applicable]

(If this paragraph is not applicable, delete other sub-paragraphs).

(a) Interest Period(s)/ Interest Accrual Period Date: [●]

(b) Coupon Payment Date(s): [●]

(c) First Coupon Payment Date: [●]



- (d) Business Day Convention: [Floating Rate Business Day Convention/Following Business Day Convention/Modified Following Business Day Convention/Preceding Business Day Convention] / [Not adjusted]
- (e) Business Center(s) (Article 4.1): [●]
- (f) Manner in which the Interest Rate[s] is/[are] to be determined: [Screen Rate Determination/FBF Determination]
- (g) Party responsible for calculating the Interest Rate(s) and Coupon Amount(s) (if other than the Calculation Agent): [●][Not Applicable]
- (h) Screen Rate Determination (Article 4.30): [Applicable/Not Applicable]  
*(If this sub-paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)*
- Relevant Rate: [●]
- Screen Page: [●]
- Relevant Time: [●]
- Coupon Determination Date: [[●] [T2] Business Days in [*specify the city*] for [*specify the currency*] before [the first day of each Interest Period/each Interest Payment Date]]
- Primary source for the Floating Rate: [●](*Specify the relevant Screen Page or "Reference Banks"*)
- Reference Banks (if the primary source is "Reference Banks"): [●](*Specify four entities/ Not Applicable*)
- Relevant Financial Centre: [*The financial centre most closely connected with the Benchmark– specify, if other than Paris*]
- Benchmark: [EURIBOR, TEC10]  
*(if the Interest Rate is determined by linear interpolation in respect of a [first/last] [long/short] Interest Period, insert the relevant interest period(s) and the relevant rates used for the determination described herein)*

	Representative Amount:	[●](Specify if quotations published on a Screen Page or offered by Reference Banks must be given for a transaction of a specific amount)
	Effective Date:	[●](Specify if quotations are not to be obtained with effect from commencement of Interest Period)
	Specified Duration:	[●](Specify period for quotation if other than duration of Interest Period)
(i)	FBF Determination (Article 4.3(c))	[Applicable/Not Applicable]  <i>(If this sub-paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)</i>
	Floating Rate:	[●]  <i>(if the Interest Rate is determined by linear interpolation in respect of a [first/last] [long/short] Interest Period, insert the relevant interest period(s) and the relevant rates used for the determination described herein)</i>
	Determination Date for Floating Rate:	[●]
	FBF Definitions:	[●]
(j)	Margin(s):	[+/-] [●]% per annum/ Not Applicable]
(k)	Minimum Interest Rate:	[0]/[●]% per annum <sup>110</sup>
(l)	Maximum Interest Rate:	[●]% per annum/ Not Applicable]
(m)	Day Count Fraction (Article 4.1):	[Actual/365 / Actual/365-FBF / Actual/Actual-[ICMA/FBF] / Actual/365 (Fixed) / Actual/360 / 30/360 / 360/360 / Bond Basis / 30/360 FBF / Actual 30A/360 (American Bond Basis) / 30E/360 / Euro Bond Basis / 30E/360-FBF]
(n)	Rate Multiplier:	[●]
17.	<b>Provisions related to the Fixed/Floating Rate Notes:</b>	[Applicable/Not Applicable]  <i>(If this paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)</i>
(a)	Change of Interest Basis:	[Change of Interest Basis at the Issuer's Discretion]/[Automatic Change of Interest Basis]

<sup>110</sup> Interest payable on the Notes shall in all circumstances be equal to at least zero.

- (b) Change of Interest Basis Date: [●]
- (c) Interest Rate applicable to the Interest Periods preceding the Change of Interest Basis Date (excluded): Determined in accordance with Article [4.2 of the Terms and Conditions, as if the Notes were Fixed Rate Notes] / [4.3 of the Terms and Conditions as if the Notes were Floating Rate Notes], as supplemented by paragraph [15/16] of this Pricing Supplement.
- (d) Interest Rate applicable to the Interest Periods following the Change of Interest Basis Date (inclusive): Determined in accordance with Article [4.2 of the Terms and Conditions, as if the Notes were Fixed Rate Notes] / [4.3 of the Terms and Conditions as if the Notes were Floating Rate Notes], as supplemented by paragraph [15/16] of this Pricing Supplement.
- (e) Notice period: [●][Not Applicable]  
*(only applicable in the event of a Change of Interest Basis at the Issuer's Discretion)*

18. **Provisions relating to Zero Coupon Notes:**

[Applicable/Not Applicable]

*(If this paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)*

- (a) Amortisation Yield: [●]% per annum
- (b) Day Count Fraction: [Actual/365 / Actual/365-FBF / Actual/Actual-[ICMA/FBF] / Actual/365 (Fixed) / Actual/360 / 30/360 / 360/360 / Bond Basis / 30/360 FBF / Actual 30A/360 (American Bond Basis) / 30E/360 / Euro Bond Basis / 30E/360-FBF]

**PROVISIONS RELATING TO REDEMPTION**

19. **Issuer Call:**

[Applicable/Not Applicable]

*(If this paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)*

- (a) Optional Redemption Date(s): [●]
- (b) Optional Redemption Amount(s) for each Note: [●] per Note [of Specified Denomination [●]]
- (c) If redeemable in part:
  - (i) Minimum redemption amount: [●]
  - (ii) Maximum redemption amount: [●]

- (d) Notice period: [●]
20. **Noteholder Put:** [Applicable/Not Applicable]  
*(If this paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)*
- (a) Optional Redemption Date(s): [●]
- (b) Optional Redemption Amount(s) for each Note: [●] per Note [of Specified Denomination [●]]
- (c) Notice period (Article 5.3): [●]
21. **Final Redemption Amount for each Note:** [[●] per Note [of Specified Denomination of [●]]]
22. **Instalment Amount** [Applicable/Not Applicable]  
*(If this sub-paragraph is not applicable, delete the remaining sub-paragraphs)*
- (a) Instalment Date(s): [●]
- (b) Instalment Amount(s) for each Note: [●]
23. **Early Redemption Amount**
- (a) Early Redemption Amount(s) for each Note paid on redemption for tax reasons (Article 5.6), for illegality (Article 5.9) or on Event of Default (Article 8): [Pursuant to the Terms]/[●] per Note [of Specified Denomination [●]/(for notes with *Payment in Instalments*) the unamortised face value]
- (b) Redemption for tax reasons on dates other than Interest Payment Dates (Article 5.6): [Yes/No]
- (c) Unmatured Coupons to be cancelled on early redemption (Materialised Notes only (Article 6.2(b))): [Yes/No/Not Applicable]

## GENERAL PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO THE NOTES

24. **Form of the Notes:** [Dematerialised Notes/Materialised Notes]  
(Materialised Notes are issued in bearer form only) (Delete as appropriate)
- (a) Form of Dematerialised Notes: [In bearer form/ registered form/Not Applicable]
- (b) Registration Agent: [Not Applicable/[●] (if applicable name and information)] (N.B.: a Registration Agent can be appointed in relation to Dematerialised Notes in fully registered form only).
- (c) Temporary Global Certificate: [Not Applicable/Temporary Global Certificate exchangeable for Physical Notes on [●] (the **Exchange Date**), forty calendar days after the issue date, unless postponed, as specified in the Temporary Global Certificate.]
25. **Financial Centre(s) (Article 6.6):** [Not Applicable/Specify] (N.B.: this relates to the date and place for payment and not the Interest Payment Dates referred to in paragraphs 15(ii) and 16(i).)
26. **Talons for future Coupons or Receipts to be attached to Physical Notes:** [Yes/No/Not Applicable]. (If yes, specify) (Only applicable to Materialised Notes.)
27. **Masse (Article 10):** (Specify details relating to the initial and alternate Representatives and their remuneration)
- Name and contact details of the initial Representative are: [●]
- Name and contact details of the alternate Representative are: [●]
- The Representative of the Masse [shall receive a remuneration of €[●] per year with respect to its functions/shall not receive compensation with respect to its functions]
- [For as long as a single Noteholder holds the Notes, and in the absence of the appointment of a Representative, the relevant Noteholder will exercise all of the powers devolved to the *Masse* by the provisions of the *Code de Commerce*, as supplemented by the Terms and Conditions of the Notes.
- The Issuer will hold (or cause any authorised agent to hold) a register of all decisions adopted

by the single Noteholder and will make it available, on request by any other Noteholder. A representative shall be appointed by the Issuer as soon as the Notes of a Series are held by more than one Noteholder (except where a Representative has already been appointed in the applicable Pricing Supplement).]

28. **Other information:**

[●]

*(insert any additional information)*

## **PURPOSE OF THE PRICING SUPPLEMENT**

This Pricing Supplement comprises the pricing supplement required for issue [and] [admission to trading of the Notes on [Euronext Paris/other (*specify*)]] described herein pursuant to the €1,000,000,000 Euro Medium Term Note Programme of the departmental Council of the *Bouches-du-Rhône*.]

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Issuer accepts responsibility for the information contained in this Pricing Supplement. [*(Relevant third party information)* has been extracted from (*specify source*). The Issuer confirms that such information has been accurately reproduced and that, so far as it is aware and is able to ascertain from information published by (*specify source*), no facts have been omitted which would render the reproduced information inaccurate or misleading.]<sup>111</sup>

Signed on behalf of the Issuer:

By: .....

Duly authorised

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<sup>111</sup> To be included if information is provided by a third party.

## PART 2

### OTHER INFORMATION

#### 1. [RISK FACTORS

[Not applicable]/[Insert any risk factor relating to the Issuer and/or the Notes)]

#### 2. ADMISSION TO TRADING

(a) Admission to trading: [An application for admission of the Notes to trading on [Euronext Paris/other (*specify*)] as from [●] has been made.]

[An application for admission of the Notes to trading on [Euronext Paris/other (*specify*)] as from [●] shall be made by the Issuer (or on its behalf).]

[Not Applicable]

*(in the case of fungible issues, specify that the original Notes have already been admitted to trading.)*

(b) Total estimated costs relating to admission to trading: [[●]/Not Applicable]

#### 3. RATINGS

Ratings: The Programme has been assigned a [AA- rating by Fitch Ratings Ireland Limited (**Fitch**).]

Fitch is established in the European Union and is registered in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1060/2009 relating to credit rating agencies as amended (the **CRA Regulation**). Fitch is included on the list of rating agencies published by the European Securities and Markets Authority on its website (<https://www.esma.europa.eu/credit-rating-agencies/cra-authorisation>) in accordance with the CRA Regulation.

[Ratings issued by Fitch are endorsed by rating agencies established in the United Kingdom and registered in accordance with the CRA Regulation which forms part of United Kingdom domestic law pursuant to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (the **United Kingdom CRA Regulation**) or certified pursuant to the United Kingdom CRA Regulation.] *(Only include for issues where the Notes are placed in the United Kingdom and the ratings assigned by an agency registered in accordance with the CRA Regulation must be endorsed by an agency registered in accordance with the United Kingdom CRA Regulation).*

Notes to be issued [have not been assigned any rating][have been assigned the following rating:

[Fitch: [●]]  
[[Other]: [●]]

*(The rating assigned to the Notes issued under the Programme must be specified above or, if an issue of Notes has been assigned a specific rating, such specific rating should be specified above.)*

*[Give a brief explanation of the meaning of this rating, if already published by the rating agency that issued it.]*

#### **4. [INTERESTS OF NATURAL AND LEGAL PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE ISSUE]**

*The purpose of this section is to describe any interest, including any conflict of interest that may have a material impact on the issue of Notes, identifying each person concerned and the nature of such interest. This may be satisfied by inserting the following statement:*

["Except commissions related to the issue of Notes paid to the Dealer(s), to the knowledge of the Issuer, no other person involved in the issue of Notes has any interest material to it. The dealer(s) and its/their affiliate(s) have engaged and may engage in investment banking and/or commercial banking transactions with the Issuer, and may perform other services for it in the ordinary course of business."]]

#### **5. REASONS FOR THE OFFER AND USE OF PROCEEDS**

[Reasons for the Offer: [●]]

#### **6. [FIXED RATE NOTES ONLY - YIELD]**

Yield: [●]

The yield is calculated at the Issue Date on the basis of the Issue Price. It is not an indication of future yield.]

#### **7. [FLOATING RATE NOTES ONLY – HISTORICAL INTEREST RATES AND BENCHMARKS]**

Details of historical interest rates [EURIBOR] achieved [Reuters].]

#### **8. DISTRIBUTION**

If it is syndicated, names of the Placement Syndicate Members:

[Not applicable/give names]

*(if this paragraph is not applicable, please delete the following subsections)*

(a) Members responsible for the Regularisation Transactions (if any):

[Not applicable/give names]

(b) Date of the underwriting agreement:

[●]

If it is not syndicated, names of the Dealer:

[Not applicable/give name]



Sale restrictions – United States of America:

[Regulation S Compliance Category 1: TEFRA C Rules / TEFRA D Rules / TEFRA Rules: Not Applicable] (TEFRA Rules are not applicable to Dematerialised Notes)

## 9. OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

- (a) ISIN Code:
- (b) Common Code:
- (c) Depository:
- (i) Euroclear France acting as Central Depository:  [Yes/No]
- (ii) Common Depository for Euroclear and Clearstream:  [Yes/No]
- (d) Any clearing system other than Euroclear France, Euroclear and Clearstream and the relevant identification numbers:  [Not Applicable/give name(s) and number(s)]
- (e) Delivery:  Delivery [against/free of payment]
- (f) Names and addresses of initial Paying Agents appointed for the Notes:
- (g) Names and addresses of additional Paying Agents appointed for the Notes:  [[]/ Not Applicable]

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The Issuer has obtained all consents, approvals and authorisations necessary in France in connection with the updating of the Programme. Any issue of Notes shall be authorised by a resolution of the departmental Council (*Conseil départemental*) of the Issuer. Pursuant to resolution n°CD-2024-04-05-12 dated 5 April 2024, the departmental Council of the Issuer authorised its Présidente to raise financing of any nature, subject to compliance with certain conditions (in particular with respect to applicable rate or term), denominated in euros, notably bonds issue including under an EMTN programme until the commencement of the electoral campaign for the Issuer's departmental Council elections, subject to the applicable legal provisions, the amounts set forth in the budget and to enter into necessary acts, contracts and amendments in that respect.

Except for events referred to in the section "Description of the Issuer", there has been no material change to (a) the fiscal and budgetary systems, (b) the gross public debt, (c) the trade balance and the balance of payments, (d) the foreign currency reserves, (e) the financial resources situation or (f) the income and expenditure, of the Issuer since 31 December 2023.

2. The Issuer is not involved in, nor are there any governmental, legal or arbitration proceedings pending or threatened, of which the Issuer is aware, which may have or have had a material effect on the financial position of the Issuer during the twelve months prior to the date of this Offering Circular.
3. An application for acceptance of the Notes for clearance through Euroclear France (10-12 place de la Bourse – 75002 Paris, France), Euroclear (boulevard du Roi Albert II – 1210 Bruxelles – Belgique) and Clearstream (42 avenue JF Kennedy – 1885 Luxembourg – Grand- Duché de Luxembourg) may be made. The Common Code and ISIN number (International Securities Identification Number) or the identification number of any other relevant clearing system for each Series of Notes shall be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement.
4. So long as any Notes issued under this Offering Circular remain outstanding, copies of the following documents shall be available, upon publication, free of charge, during normal office hours, at any days of the week (except Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays) at the specified offices of the Fiscal Agent and the Paying Agent(s):
  - (a) the Fiscal Agency Agreement (which includes the form of accounting letter (*lettre comptable*), the Temporary Global Certificates, Physical Notes, Coupons, Receipts and Talons);
  - (b) the two most recent initial budgets (as amended, if applicable, by any supplemental budget) and the published administrative accounts of the Issuer;
  - (c) all Pricing Supplements relating to any Notes admitted to trading on Euronext Paris or any other regulated market of the EEA;
  - (d) a copy of this Offering Circular and any supplement to this Offering Circular or any new offering circular;
  - (e) the documents incorporated by reference into this Offering Circular; and
  - (f) all reports, correspondence and other documents, appraisals and statements issued by any expert at the request of the Issuer, any extracts of which, or references to which, are contained in this Offering Circular relating to any issue of Notes.
5. The price and the amount of the Notes issued within the Programme shall be determined by the Issuer and each relevant Dealer at the time of the issue in accordance with the market conditions.

6. For any Tranche of Fixed Rate Notes, an indication of the yield in respect of such Notes shall be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. The yield is calculated at the Issue Date of the Notes on the basis of the Issue Price. The specified yield shall be calculated as the yield to maturity as at the issue date of the notes and shall not be an indication of future yield.
7. In connection with the issue of each Tranche, one of the Dealers may act as stabilisation manager (the "**Stabilisation Manager**"). The entity acting as Stabilisation Manager shall be specified in the applicable Pricing Supplement. For the purposes of an issue, the Stabilisation Manager (or any person acting on behalf of the Stabilisation Manager) may over-allot Notes or take action with a view to supporting the market price of the Notes at a level higher than that which might otherwise prevail in the absence of such action (the "**Stabilisation Measures**"). However, such Stabilisation Measures may not necessarily be taken. Such Stabilisation Measures may only commence after the date on which the pricing supplement of the issue of the relevant Tranche have been made public and, once commenced, may end at any time and must end no later than the earlier of the following two dates: (a) 30 calendar days after the issue date of the relevant Tranche and (b) 60 calendar days after the date of allotment of the Notes of the relevant Tranche. Any Stabilisation Measures taken must comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
8. In this Offering Circular, unless otherwise provided or the context requires otherwise, any reference to "€", "Euro", "EUR" and "euro" refers to the lawful currency in the Member States that have adopted the single currency introduced in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community as amended.
9. Each of the Dealers and their affiliates (including where a Dealer acts in its capacity as calculation agent) may or may in the future, in the normal course of their activities, engage in commercial dealings with or act as financial advisers to the Issuer, in relation to securities issued by the Issuer. In the normal course of their activities, each of the Dealers and their affiliates (including where a Dealer acts in its capacity as calculation agent) may or may in the future (i) engage in investment banking, trading or hedging activities including activities that may include prime brokerage business or entry into derivative transactions, (ii) act as underwriters in connection with the offering of securities issued by the Issuer or (iii) act as financial advisers to the Issuer. In the context of these transactions, each of the Dealers and their affiliates (including where a Dealer acts in its capacity as calculation agent) hold or may hold securities issued by the Issuer in which case they receive or will receive customary fees and commissions for these transactions. In addition, the Issuer and each of the Dealers (including where a Dealer acts in its capacity as calculation agent) may be engaged in transactions involving an index or derivatives based on or relating to the Notes, which could affect the market price, liquidity or value of Notes and could have an adverse effect on the interests of the Noteholders.
10. The Issuer's Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) is 969500DMKVFI7KGA5F92.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OFFERING CIRCULAR**

**Person assuming responsibility for this Offering Circular**

**In the name of the Issuer**

I confirm, having taken all reasonable care to ensure that such is the case, that the information contained in this Offering Circular is, to my knowledge, in accordance with the facts and omits nothing likely to affect its import.

Marseille, 10 October 2024

**CONSEIL DEPARTEMENTAL DES BOUCHES-DU-RHÔNE**

Hôtel du Département 52, avenue Saint-Just 13256 Marseille Cedex 20

Represented by: Yves MORAINÉ

Vice-President of the Departmental Council of the Bouches-du-Rhône, General Rapporteur of the Budget

**Issuer**

**Département des Bouches-du-Rhône**

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**Arranger**

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France

**Dealers**

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INVESTMENT BANK**

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92547 Montrouge  
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France

**HSBC CONTINENTAL EUROPE**

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75116 Paris  
France

**NATIXIS**

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75013 Paris  
France

**Fiscal Agent, Principal Paying Agent and Calculation Agent**

**BNP Paribas (acting through its Securities Services business)**

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**Legal advisers**

**To the Issuer**

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**To the Arranger and the Dealers**

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