

A - THE RHÔNE-ALPES REGION

1. AN EXCEPTIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

1.1. Lyons is situated some 480 km Southeast of Paris, 400 km North of the Côte d'Azur and 150 km West of Switzerland.

1.2. Rhône-Alpes is comprised of eight departments:

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|---------------|---------------------|
| - Ain (01) | - Ardèche (07) |
| - Drôme (26) | - Isère (38) |
| - Loire (42) | - Rhône (69) |
| - Savoie (73) | - Haute-Savoie (74) |

The region covers a surface area of 43,700 square kilometres, or 8% of France.

1.3. Its exceptional geographical situation makes Rhône-Alpes an important economic European crossroad. The Rhône-Alpes region forms a natural corridor within France itself connecting the north and south of the country; it is also at the centre of Europe being situated between Northwest Europe and the Mediterranean basin, and between Central Europe and the Atlantic coast.

1.4. Lyons, the regional capital, possesses an International Airport (Satolas, 30 km from downtown) an excellent highway network and fast reliable rail-links (TGV and others).

1.5. The exhibition site "EUREXPO", near Lyons Satolas Airport, is one of the most modern and large exhibition parks in Europe.

1.6. The French government decentralization policy introduced in 1982 has contributed to the dynamism of Rhône-Alpes.