

PROLOGIUM

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Gilles Normand

President ProLogium Europe
and EVP Global Development



EDITORIAL

« The Taiwanese group ProLogium has announced its decision to invest a colossal 5.2 billion euros in its first solid-state battery plant outside Taiwan. But the decision to set up this strategic plant in the Hauts-de-France region was anything but trivial.

ProLogium has joined ACC, Envision AESC and Verkor in the new landscape of gigafactories. By focusing on new-generation solid-state batteries, it has added essential diversification to the region's offerings, thereby strengthening the range of available technologies. These batteries are mainly intended for the high-end electric vehicle, solar energy and industrial applications markets.

The Taiwanese giant's development in Dunkirk is not only about a simple industrial plant. It will also consolidate the fast-growing battery ecosystem in the Hauts-de-France region. Our region has confirmed its position as Europe's battery valley, further enhancing its reputation as a hub for innovation and cutting-edge production. It is also part of the REV3 transformation program, which aims to make Hauts-de-France one of Europe's most advanced regions in terms of the energy and digital transition.

Lastly, this investment decision reflects the effective collaborative effort and alignment of all the partners who were involved in winning the Taiwanese company's setting up. Nord France Invest worked in collaboration with the French government, Business France, the Hauts-de-France Region, the Dunkirk Urban Community, Dunkerque Promotion and the Port of Dunkirk.

I'd like to extend my warmest thanks to Gilles Normand for granting us this interview, which takes a behind-the-scenes look at this major setting-up for the region.





GILLES NORMAND
PROLOGIUM

President ProLogium Europe
and EVP Global Development

CAN YOU GIVE US SOME BACKGROUND ON YOUR DECISION TO INVEST IN HAUTS-DE-FRANCE?



ProLogium was founded in 2006 by Vincent Yang and has grown steadily, driven by innovative technology—starting with our next-generation solid-state batteries for electric vehicles. At our original factory in Taiwan, we installed a pilot line to produce around 8,000 sample cells that we supplied to global carmakers for testing and module development.

Now we're taking things to the next level by setting up ProLogium's first overseas gigafactory outside Taiwan.

WHAT DID YOU SEE AS THE PROJECT'S MAIN CHALLENGE?



Selecting the right location: we wanted a site offering the best possible match for our project and growth plans. *Our decision to set up in France came at the end of a rigorous process: we reviewed close to 150 sites across Europe and the United States before shortlisting three—Dunkirk in France, plus two locations in Germany and the Netherlands.*

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE FRANCE?



We opted for Dunkirk because of the advantages it offers an advanced industrial and high-tech battery-manufacturing plant like ours. **Europe is one of the world's more mature markets for electric vehicles and its EV push means a stable environment for a plant designed to reach a capacity of 48 Gigawatts per hour—producing batteries that will power between 500,000 and 750,000 vehicles a year.** We're also teaming up with local partners for recycling and research. But our gigafactory here is the first stage in Prologium's plans for business development in France.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE HAUTS-DE-FRANCE? WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE REGION'S BIGGEST STRENGTHS?



First, Hauts-de-France has very substantial research capacity: Dunkirk is not far from the University of Picardy Jules Verne in Amiens, which has strong ties to CNRS, France's national center for scientific research. There's also a supply of competitively priced, decarbonized energy from the nearby EDF nuclear power plant in Gravelines—a major plus for a company like ours and our carbon footprint. The Port of Dunkirk has a strategic location offering direct links to Northern Europe, Asia and the US. And **ProLogium's plant will be at the very heart of the region's "Battery Valley"**—a position that will allow us to take advantage of the existing industrial fabric and tech infrastructure. Last but not least are the people. Hauts-de-France has the skilled pool of talent our company needs to grow and put down roots.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE SUPPORT YOU RECEIVED FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND HOW THAT DIRECTLY HELPED YOUR PLANS?



This project is one of the biggest investments of its kind in France to date, and we brought it over the line thanks to the close contacts we've built up with stakeholders in France and potential partners in Europe. We've had strong support throughout: our CEO Vincent Yang met with President Macron at the Choose France summit in 2022. We also held discussions with the Minister for the Economy and with Business France, as well as the Hauts-de-France Region, the Dunkirk Greater Urban Community and the Port of Dunkirk.

IS THERE AN ANECDOTE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR CONNECTION TO THE REGION?



I studied at EDHEC Business School in Lille and have returned several times to speak to students there. Being back in Hauts-de-France and Dunkirk, exploring the region and getting to know more about the people who live here takes me back to my student days—creating some Proustian madeleine moments. And what they said then is true: the weather might be cold, but the people are warm. ***Everyone I've dealt with at the Port of Dunkirk, the Dunkirk Greater Urban Community and in Hauts-de-France has been warm and approachable. It builds trust and makes you feel welcome. My colleagues in Taiwan feel the same—it's priceless, rare, something you don't often find on the international business scene.***

DO YOU HAVE ANY PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR AN INVESTOR WHO MIGHT BE HESITATING ABOUT SETTING UP IN THE REGION?



Start by doing the research, and make sure it's based on the facts. Focus on your customers' and partners' needs, and build on these. Because, in the long run, that's what will help you weather any ups and downs that may lie ahead. French regions offer a wealth of good infrastructure and supply chains, along with sound ecosystems. For ProLogium, ***Hauts-de-France ticks all the boxes for electric batteries. This region is the ideal choice for our first gigafactory.***

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE #1 MYTH ABOUT DOING BUSINESS IN FRANCE THAT NEEDS DEBUNKING?



That the French in general lack entrepreneurship and are risk-averse. You often hear French people described as resistant to change. But in reality, ***France has a dynamic culture of entrepreneurship and a wealth of talented, innovative businessmen and women.*** What's more, the country has a very robust research and innovation ecosystem, backed by solid support from central and local government, along with the infrastructure to encourage company creation and risk taking.

NEED HELP FOR YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT?

CONTACT US!



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