



# PROVENCE PROMOTION

## Interview with Hendrik Van Hoeyweghen (Katoen Natie)

**"We believe in the region and its development potential!"**

It would be difficult for Hendrik Van Hoeyweghen, Director of the Katoen Natie site in Provence, to be clearer! And on January 30 this year, the Company launched its future 70 000 m<sup>2</sup> platform in Saint-Martin-de-Crau, to invest in its own convictions. This event confirms the "love story" between the Belgian Company and Provence that began in 1998 and has been accompanied by Provence Promotion ever since ...



### > So what is this future project?

Hendrik Van Hoeyweghen : In 2007, we will start work for a 70 000 m<sup>2</sup> logistics platform in Saint-Martin-de-Crau, which represents an investment of 25 million Euros. It will be dedicated to the treatment of all major consumer goods. Operation of this platform should start at the end of 2007???

This new site is consistent with our previous actions and reflects our growth policy that began in 1998. That was the year in which we set up our first platform in the region, targeted at the main petrochemical groups.

Two years later, we broadened our offer with the creation of a second site at the Etang de Berre.

At the end of 2003, we developed the Saint-Martin-de-Crau site where a 20 000 m<sup>2</sup> platform was built to complement the existing 30 000 m<sup>2</sup> platform.

In 2005, investments went to Val de l'Arc for an activity serving the petrochemical and plastics industry.

### > What organisation will be deployed?

H. Van H. : A team of about 300 persons will be on site. (At the moment, the company has 170 employees in the region). It is difficult to define the number of new jobs at the moment, since it depends on demand from our customers; some require a large number of personnel in small areas, and vice versa.

The Company will offer the same services as on its other platforms; partnerships between Katoen Natie's different sites in the region and elsewhere, a highly operational building design to optimise flows, computerised management of workshops, etc. All these are major assets, and are the reasons why we are recognized specialists in logistics.

### > What was the reason for the construction of this platform?

H. Van H. : The proximity of the port is a genuine advantage for our customers; this is one of the parameters that attracted our attention as soon as we set up in Provence. But the region also has a genuine potential in logistics, and we are fully committed to this potential. Given our conviction about its capacity, we have no choice but to make these investments. We are deliberately getting ahead of demand with this installation. The site will enable us to cover all France and Southern Europe (Spain, Italy, etc.). Finally, note that we are still searching for available land ...

### > What was the role of Provence Promotion in your growth?

H. Van H. : They assisted us in several ways:

- in relations with institutions; chambers of commerce, town halls, local authorities (obtaining building permits and workshop operating permits ...)

- in everything related to jobs, hiring, training and subsidies in the activity, etc.

More specifically in the field of training, we are now working closely with training organisations and we are accepting trainees within our workshops. A synergy that is a genuine human investment for the future ...