



**DUNKIRK AND ITS  
PORT ON THE ROAD  
TO THE WORLD EXPO**  
WORLD EXPO L'EXPOSITION 2025

PRESS RELEASE







## DUNKIRK ANNOUNCES ITS PARTICIPATION INTO OSAKA KANSAI 2025 WORLD EXPO

On October 4th 2024, the Urban Community of Dunkirk, represented by its president Patrice VERGRIETE, and Dunkerque-Port, represented by Maurice GEORGES, chairman of the executive board, officially established their partnership with the Pavillon France at the 2025 World Expo in Osaka, Japan. This event was attended by His Excellency Makita SHIMOKAWA, Ambassador of Japan to France, and Mr. Jacques MAIRE, president of COFREX and general commissioner of the Pavillon France.

The morning continued with the inauguration of the logistics warehouse of the Japanese group Yusen Logistics at the west area of Dunkirk port, further strengthening the economic ties between Dunkirk and Japan.



### **MAKITA SHIMOKAWA,** **AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO FRANCE**

« The Osaka Kansai 2025 World Expo in Japan will take place from April 13 to October 13, 2025, with the theme 'Designing the Future Society, Imagining Our Life of Tomorrow.' This expo will be a place for unexpected encounters and discoveries, bringing together countries from around the world for six months. Japan appreciates the sustained efforts of COFREX (French Exhibition Company) in organizing the Pavillon France at the Osaka Kansai 2025 World Expo. The Urban Community of Dunkirk and Dunkerque-Port will also participate. This will be a tremendous opportunity to promote trade and economic exchanges. We hope that many French people will visit Japan on this occasion. »

SCAN THIS QR CODE  
TO SEE A VIDEO PRESENTATION OF  
THE OSAKA KANSAI WORLD EXPO.







**PATRICE VERGRIETE,**  
PRESIDENT OF THE URBAN COMMUNITY OF DUNKIRK

« The participation of Dunkirk in the Pavillon France at the Osaka 2025 World Expo signifies international recognition of the major transformations undertaken in this territory over the past ten years. Whether regarding our industrial models, daily mobility, or our urban and social approach, Dunkirk is now a laboratory of innovation where the city, port, and industry of tomorrow are being built for the benefit of all. Designated by the World Economic Forum as one of the 20 cities capable of 'saving the world,' Dunkirk will share its experiences and solutions for a sustainable future at the Osaka 2025 World Expo. »

**MAURICE GEORGES,**  
CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DUNKIRK PORT

« Dunkerque-Port is proud to collaborate with the Urban Community to showcase, at the Osaka 2025 World Expo, the collective work undertaken over the past ten years to decarbonize the port ecosystem in all its components: maritime, land, logistics, and industry. Together, we are building the port of tomorrow, one that respects biodiversity, is at the forefront of efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, and is deeply rooted in the territory to improve the quality of life for residents. This participation also represents a unique opportunity to strengthen our relationships with Japanese economic stakeholders, whether from industry, transport, or logistics. »



**JACQUES MAIRE,**  
PRESIDENT OF COFREX AND GENERAL COMMISSIONER OF  
PAVILLON FRANCE

« The Pavillon France is delighted to welcome Dunkirk as a partner for the thematic fortnight 'Sustainable City and Port.' Together with its Urban Community and Port, this territory has been committed for many years to a significant ecological transition and a low-carbon reindustrialization appreciated by Japanese companies. When Japan invites the whole world to Osaka to 'imagine the life of tomorrow,' its presence in Osaka makes perfect sense and contributes to the prominence of our country. »



SCAN THIS QR CODE  
TO SEE A VIDEO PRESENTATION OF  
THE OSAKA KANSAI WORLD EXPO.

The 2025 World Expo in Osaka, which will take place from April 13 to October 13, 2025, positions itself as a true global laboratory of innovations, bringing together public and private economic actors to build the society of tomorrow around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The theme of this edition, "Designing Future Society for Our Lives," invites collective reflection on the major challenges of our time.

# FROM DUNKIRK TO OSAKA

## THE RED THREAD OF PROGRESS IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES



The France Pavilion, with the theme "A Hymn to Love," will present a unique vision of the future in response to environmental and social challenges. Three forms of love will be at the heart of this project: self-love, love for others, and love for nature. The pavilion will explore how technology can serve the environment and how urban spaces can become sources of inspiration and well-being.

Dunkirk, a pioneer in ecological transition, perfectly embodies this vision. Designated by the World Economic Forum as one of the 20 territories committed to "saving the world," the Urban Community of Dunkirk, through its 17 municipalities and 200,000 inhabitants, illustrates the synergy between social development, economic transformation, and environmental protection. With an ambitious decarbonization strategy, Dunkirk and its port have set a clear goal: to reduce their CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030. This comprehensive plan involves a complete overhaul of production, consumption, and transport methods, bringing together public and private economic actors around a shared vision.

Recognized as Europe's leading energy platform and France's decarbonization laboratory, Dunkirk is a model of sustainable reindustrialization and innovative mobility. It is therefore natural that the French Exhibitions Company (COFREX) chose Dunkirk and its port to represent French excellence during the thematic fortnight of the France Pavilion, titled "Sustainable City and Port," from May 16 to 31, 2025, at the France Pavilion at the World Expo in Osaka.



With a coalition of local stakeholders :

Urban Community of Dunkirk

Dunkirk-Port

EcosystemD

Tourist and Convention Office

The Dunkirk region will exhibit within the France Pavilion from May 16 to 18, 2025, in a dedicated space under the brand: "Spirit of Dunkerque".

# DUNKIRK AND ITS PORT, FRANCE'S DECARBONIZATION LABORATORY AND EUROPE'S LEADING ENERGY PLATFORM

## DUNKIRK, A MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Dunkirk is firmly positioned as a pioneer of green and inclusive mobility. Thanks to an ambitious vision and innovative initiatives, the region is transforming its infrastructure to provide its residents with sustainable and accessible transportation. It is now the largest urban area in Europe to make public bus transport completely free, thus facilitating travel while reducing the carbon footprint of commuting.



With a 125% increase in bus ridership over the past five years, the region holds the world record for the growth in public transport users. Additionally, Dunkirk is developing a bold model for home-to-work mobility with the concept of "factories without parking," encouraging alternative transportation solutions for the 20,000 jobs that will be created in its territory. Thus, it is emerging as a true global model for the future of mobility.

## DUNKIRK, PIONEER OF DECARBONIZATION

An industrial region in full transformation, Dunkirk faces a significant challenge: its industrial zone alone accounts for 20% of France's industrial CO2 emissions, representing 6% of the country's total emissions. Aware of the urgency, the coalition of local stakeholders is at the forefront of innovation to meet this challenge. Over the past decade, Dunkirk and its port have become benchmarks in decarbonization and ecological transition, making the region a true "French laboratory for decarbonization and reindustrialization."



Dunkirk has also been selected by the European Union as part of the NetZero Cities program, which aims to support 100 cities in achieving climate neutrality by 2030. The Urban Community of Dunkirk has committed to reaching carbon neutrality for its living area by 2030 and for its industrial platform by 2050, thanks to the massive development of renewable and decarbonized energies.

## DUNKIRK, TERRITORY OF ENERGY SOLUTIONS

The Dunkirk metropolitan area stands out as one of Europe's main energy hubs, thanks to the diversity and scale of its energy production and exchange facilities.



Dunkirk brings together a range of initiatives and solutions aimed at producing local, decarbonized, and sustainable energy.



# DUNKIRK TAKES PART IN THE 2025 WORLD EXPO IN OSAKA UNDER THE BANNER "SPIRIT OF DUNKIRK"

From May 16 to 18, 2025, Dunkirk will be in the spotlight within the France Pavilion at the World Expo in Osaka, featuring a dedicated space under the territorial brand "Spirit of Dunkirk." This participation is supported by a coalition of local stakeholders, including EcosystemD, the Tourism and Convention Office, the Urban Community of Dunkirk, and Dunkirk-Port.

With nearly 28 million visitors expected, this exposition will serve as a unique global showcase to highlight Dunkirk's expertise in decarbonization, economic and port development, as well as its efforts in ecological and social transition. It will also be an exceptional opportunity to showcase the richness of its heritage to an international audience, thereby affirming the region's position as a leader in sustainable innovation.

It is under the banner "Spirit of Dunkirk" and with a visual identity created for the event that the Dunkirk region will present itself at the 2025 World Expo in Osaka. The graphic universe, featuring pink tones, is both a hymn to love and a tribute to the famous Japanese cherry blossoms, known as Sakura. The iconic lighthouse of Saint-Pol-sur-Mer, recognized as the most beautiful lighthouse in France, will play a central role in this new identity, symbolizing both the heritage and the radiance of the region.

The expression "Spirit of Dunkirk" finds its origins in the historical events of World War II, specifically during the evacuation of Dunkirk in May and June 1940. In May 1940, Allied forces (primarily British, French, and Belgian) found themselves surrounded by German troops in the Dunkirk region. To avoid a total defeat, they launched Operation Dynamo, a massive evacuation of allied troops from Dunkirk to England. This operation was carried out by the Royal Navy and involved a diverse fleet of ships, including fishing boats, private yachts, and other small civilian vessels that took the initiative to cross the English Channel with their own boats to provide assistance. A total of 340,000 soldiers were rescued during this operation, marking a turning point in the conflict. This spontaneous and united mobilization has become a symbol of the spirit of resistance and solidarity.

Still today, the expression is often used in contexts where communities or individuals demonstrate resilience and mutual support in the face of crises or major challenges. The movie "Dunkirk," directed by Christopher Nolan and filmed in the city in 2016, recounts this historical moment.

"The Spirit of Dunkirk is the strength to resist, to face adversity, and to rise again to rebuild. Often a victim of the wars that have marked its history, our city has learned to reinvent itself, to look beyond to prepare for a better future. This is our strength, our uniqueness; it is what makes us Dunkirk citizens, beyond the passage of time."

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**Patrice VERGRIETE, President of the Urban Community of Dunkirk and Mayor of Dunkirk**





# DUNKIRK AT THE HEART OF THE FRANCE PAVILION AT THE 2025 WORLD EXPO IN OSAKA

## DUNKIRK AND JAPAN: CONNECTIONS THROUGH HISTORY, INDUSTRY, OR EVEN GASTRONOMY

The Urban Community of Dunkirk took the initiative, in 2016, to bring together a number of cities that, like the Dunkirk metropolitan area, have risen from the ashes after chaos, within the "International Network of Memory Cities." It was therefore natural for Hiroshima, a city that has endured great suffering, to join this network.



Economically, the region hosts several Japanese leaders. Kubota Europe SAS, a manufacturer of agricultural machinery, established itself near the Dunkirk metropolitan area in Bierne in 2014. Bozel Europe, a global manufacturer of cored wires for metal processing, is now joined by Yusen Logistics, which will inaugurate its logistics warehouses in Loon-Plage on October 4, 2024.

In 2023, the ADEME seminar and its Japanese counterpart, NEDO, focused on "Decarbonizing Industry through Hydrogen" took place in the region. At the end of August 2024, ITO Shintaro, the Japanese Minister of the Environment, visited Dunkirk to discuss nuclear risk management.



Finally, on the culinary front, one of Dunkirk's specialties, "Doigts de Jean Bart" (an almond cake with coffee cream coated in chocolate), has found its place in Takashimaya stores (the equivalent of Galeries Lafayette in France) for the past 15 years.

**A THEMED FORTNIGHT DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND PORTS**  
FROM MAY 16 TO 31, 2025

The France Pavilion will feature a thematic program inspired by its guiding theme, an ode to love and the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Urban Community of Dunkirk and Dunkirk Port will particularly focus on UN Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable."

**THREE DAYS OF CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS AROUND THE "DUNKIRK MODEL"**  
FROM MAY 16 TO 18, 2025

Over three days, a series of events will showcase the multiple facets of the "Dunkirk Model." Local and international experts, both in person and remotely, will share Dunkirk's decarbonization strategy, economic development, urban transformation, and rich heritage. These discussions will provide the public with a comprehensive overview of the region's ambitions and successes.

Examples of conferences include:

- Reinventing the city and mobility
- Energy transition: Dunkirk, a model of decarbonization
- Economic and port development: opportunities and sustainable growth
- Dunkirk and its heritage: a story of transformation

**A "SPIRIT OF DUNKIRK" SPACE WITHIN THE FRANCE PAVILION**

In parallel, the "Spirit of Dunkirk" space within the France Pavilion will offer visitors a sensory immersion into Dunkirk's culture. Through interactive experiences, they will discover the flavors, landscapes, and traditions of Dunkirk while exploring the economic and tourist attractions of the region.

**AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE FOR DUNKIRK RESIDENTS**

The World Expo will also be experienced in Dunkirk through the installation of spaces recounting the history and role of World Expos throughout the ages. The experience will also be digital, featuring a virtual reality system that allows for an interactive experience.

# THE "SPIRIT OF DUNKIRK" ACTORS AT THE FRANCE PAVILLON

## DURING OSAKA 2025 WORLD EXPO

### ABOUT THE URBAN COMMUNITY OF DUNKIRK

The Urban Community of Dunkirk (CUD) is an intercommunal authority located in the Nord department in the Hauts-de-France region. It comprises 17 municipalities and has a population of 200,000 residents. It has been presided over by Patrice Vergriete since 2014.

As a territory in full transformation, it is the leading energy platform in Europe, contributing to the development of a reference international low-carbon industrial zone. A pioneer in green reindustrialization, it aims to create 20,000 jobs over the next 10 years and is fostering an ecosystem around electric mobility, positioning Dunkirk as the gateway to the Hauts-de-France "battery valley."

By placing innovation at the heart of its initiatives, it incorporates social, economic, and environmental issues into its planning and operations. The Urban Community of Dunkirk is inventing the city of tomorrow in terms of housing, public amenities, and transportation, notably becoming the largest European metropolitan area to establish free public transport.

### ABOUT DUNKIRK PORT

Dunkirk is the leading French port complex, working in cooperation with other maritime ports in the Hauts-de-France region. Its ecosystem currently integrates numerous maritime, logistics, and industrial activities, with a commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. More sustainable and resilient, the port is the leading energy platform in Europe. The development of a reference low-carbon industrial zone on a European scale perfectly illustrates this commitment. It relies on the decarbonization of existing industrial processes, circular economy practices, and green reindustrialization, of which the Dunkirk region is a pioneer. With its ecosystem centered around electric mobility, Dunkirk Port is the heart of the Hauts-de-France electric battery valley. Its platform of innovative solutions, combined with the expansion of container and logistics activities and a multimodal transport network, creates new opportunities for the region.

In total, the port generates an annual added value of €3.8 billion, supporting a total of 29,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs. By 2030, new developments currently underway in the industrial-port area are expected to create an additional 20,000 jobs.

### ABOUT ÉCOSYSTÈME D

Écosystème D is the key partner for the sustainable development, promotion, and transformation of the region. Launched by Patrice Vergriete, President of the Urban Community of Dunkirk, in 2014 during the General States of Local Employment, Écosystème D aims to reposition Dunkirk at the forefront of the decarbonized industry. With the acceleration of challenges in the region and the creation of 20,000 jobs by 2030, the metropolitan area is experiencing a true economic revival. In this context, the Urban Community of Dunkirk will inaugurate, in the second half of 2024, an innovation space to embody and drive the economic transformation of its industrial model. Also named Écosystème D and located in direct proximity to the city center, it has been built according to exemplary energy standards, producing more energy than it consumes, in line with the region's ambitions. The Écosystème D building will host various activities and functions, all related to energy transition and industrial decarbonization.

Écosystème D will serve not only as a research and innovation center for companies, startups, and engineering students, but also as a campus in partnership with IMT Nord Europe and the University of Littoral Opal Coast, offering training in energy and environmental engineering. The site will also include co-working spaces, technological halls, and incubators, thus enhancing the economic dynamism of the entire region.

### ABOUT THE TOURISM AND CONVENTION OFFICE

The Tourism and Convention Office is a key player in the tourism development of the Urban Community of Dunkirk. Its mission revolves around several strategic axes aimed at strengthening the region's visibility and influence at the regional, national, and international levels while providing quality service to visitors. Engaged in the active promotion of the territory, the Tourism Office develops targeted promotional actions (fairs, press trips, communication campaigns) highlighting the diversity and richness of its tourism offerings. It also plays an essential role in welcoming visitors, whether individuals, groups, or businesses. The Office coordinates local tourism stakeholders, collaborating closely with hotels, restaurants, guides, and other service providers to offer a seamless and high-quality tourist experience. This commitment to a collective approach has earned Dunkirk a category 1 ranking, attesting to the quality of the welcome and services provided to visitors. As the manager of the Dunkirk Congress Palace—the Kursaal—it is also responsible for the programming and organization of major events, whether for the general public or professionals. The Kursaal hosts numerous fairs, congresses, and cultural or economic events each year, thereby making Dunkirk an essential destination for both business and leisure.



## ABOUT THE EMBASSY OF JAPAN IN FRANCE

Mr. Makita Shimokawa has been serving as the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Japan to France, the Principality of Andorra, and the Principality of Monaco since October 2022. As the diplomatic representation of Japan in the French Republic, the Embassy covers all aspects of Japanese-French relations, from the protection of Japanese nationals in France to bilateral relations. The Embassy provides support and participates in activities aimed at developing Japanese-French exchanges in human, economic, and cultural spheres. It is also tasked with strengthening the "exceptional partnership" between Japan and France, fostering cooperation in multiple domains, and promoting the attractiveness of Japan.

## ABOUT COFREX

Founded in January 2018, COFREX (Compagnie Française des Expositions) is a public limited company. Its creation marks the first emergence of a dedicated structure for France's participation in major international public events. COFREX's mission is to prepare, organize, and implement France's participation in World Expositions and international exhibitions. The establishment of COFREX is part of a sustainable project that leverages the experience gained from previous Expositions to optimize and minimize costs for future French participations. It operates within a partnership framework involving public and private stakeholders, united around the image and economic attractiveness of France. It also has a subsidiary in Japan: Republic of France Pavilion Osaka 2025.

## ABOUT THE FRENCH PAVILION AT THE OSAKA WORLD EXPO 2025

The Osaka World Expo 2025 (Japan) will take place from April 13 to October 13, 2025, under the theme "Designing the Future, Imagining Our Life Tomorrow," with three sub-themes: "Saving Lives," "Inspiring Lives," and "Connecting Lives." It will be held on Yumeshima Island, an artificial island located in Osaka Bay, covering an area of 155 hectares, with the overall architecture designed by architect Sosuke Fujimoto. All pavilions will be connected by a "roof ring" measuring 615 meters in diameter and 2 kilometers in circumference, and will be distributed across three macro-zones: Green World, Pavilion World, and Water World. Over 161 countries will be represented, and 28 million visitors are expected to attend the event. The French Pavilion, which aims to showcase French innovations and know-how, will be located in the "Inspiring Lives" area, close to the Japan Pavilion and the main entrance of the World Expo.

<https://www.franceosaka2025.fr/>



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**FRANCE**  
EXPO 2025 OSAKA

 spirit of  
**Dunkerque**  
SUSTAINABLE PORT & CITY