

France (République française)



QUICK FACTS

Population: 66.5 million (2015)

Area: 643,8701 sq. km (Comparable to Texas)

Capital: Paris (2.2 million)

Languages: French

GDP Per Capita: \$41,200

EDUCATION

The French education system is compulsory for children between the ages of six and sixteen with the option of attending a secondary school afterwards (either a general secondary school or a vocational school).

Tourism

Every year France has over 83 million tourists, which makes up roughly 7% of French GDP. France is the number 1 ski destination in the world, and is also home to many popular cultural sites.



Eiffel Tower

France is located in Western Europe and is one of the founding members of the European Union. France has existed as a unified region with little change since the Treaty of Verdun in 843, and has a history under the guise of Gaul that dates back to the pre-Roman era. Today, France is most known for its beautiful country scenery, its fine cuisine, its culture, and its wine. Currently the French Republic is headed by President François Hollande and Prime Minister Manuel Valls, both of whom are members of the French Socialist Party and were elected in 2012 and 2014 respectively.

RELIGION

Roman Catholics make up the majority religion in France, approximately 66% of the population identifies as Christian, followed by 9% Muslim, and a mixture of other religions at less than 1% each—a large component of the French public are atheists. The French state itself is secular and has not collected data on religious affiliation since the 1872 national census.

ETHNICITY and DEMOGRAPHICS

France follows the principle of Jus Soli, which is Latin for “right of the soil.” Jus Soli means that being French is not necessarily French by bloodline but by adopting French customs and language. As with religious affiliation, the French state does not collect official census data on race or ethnicity as it sees itself as a “color-blind” society. France is made-up of a variety of ethnic groups, most prevalently from North Africa due to its colonial past. France still maintains dependencies abroad including Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Mayotte, and Reunion.

While the national birth rate had been dropping for a while, as of 2006 it is near the “replacement level.” French unemployment is relatively high at 10.1 (double this for youth unemployment) and has witnessed an annual budget deficit of 3.6% of GDP in 2015 — which is above the allowable limit set by the EU’s stability and growth pact.

France’s economy is diversified though the government still plays a large role in some areas such as power, defense, and public transportation. Over the last several years the French government has worked to further privatize organizations such as Air France and Renault.



CONTEMPORARY FRANCE

Geographically, France is the largest country in the EU and the second largest by population. France has used the Euro as a currency since its inception in 1999 and is one of the founding six member of the European Union. Additionally, being the second largest economy by GDP in the EU, France has been able to play a strong role in shaping European policy. Part of this can be seen in its advocacy for a strong Common Agricultural Policy (2007-2013 saw 70bn Euros invested in French agriculture by the EU) and other parts of French influence in EU policy can be seen in its normative foreign policy objectives and initiatives to invest in former colonies.

France has had a slow recovery post Euro-crisis, with growth rates lower than both EU and Eurozone averages. France has also suffered in the realm of competitiveness as the cost of producing goods in France continues to rise faster than that of its counterparts (through wage and other cost increases) has led to a decrease in exports and a hampered domestic manufacturing industry.



FRENCH HERITAGE IN THE USA

French migration to North America dates back to the 16th century. Today, approximately 10 million Americans have French or French Canadian heritage and an additional 750,000 speak French Creole. Some well known US cities founded by those of French origin include Saint Louis, New Orleans, Mobile, Juneau, and Detroit. Much of what is now the US was purchased from the French government under Napoleon's leadership in 1803 in what is known as the Louisiana Purchase. This territory includes what is now Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, and parts of new Mexico, Texas, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Louisiana.



The flag is comprised of three vertical bands colored blue, white and red.



Palace de la Bourse

FAMOUS FRENCH CITIZENS

France has been home to many well know individuals over the years, ranging from philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau, to doctors such as Nostradamus, to leaders such as Napoleon, Joan of Arc, and Charles De Gaulle. Some modern examples include Yo Yo Ma, David Guetta, and Emma Watson who were all born in France.

FRENCH WORDS

Hi Bonjour
ByeAu revoir
Good morningBonjour
YesOui
NoNon
Please.....S'il vous plaît
Thank youMerci
How are you?..... Comment allez-vous ?
I do not understandJe ne comprends pas
I understand.....Je comprends
Where is...?.....Où est...?
How much?.....Combien?
Do you speak English?Est-ce que vous parlez anglais?

USEFUL LINKS

- http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/france/index_en.htm
- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>
- <http://us.france.fr/>
- <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/european-union/>