

# France



Capital	Paris
Language(s)	French
Currency	€uro
Area	547,030 km <sup>2</sup>
Population	65,300,000 inhabitants
Population density	199.5 inhabitants / km <sup>2</sup>
PIB (2011)	2,808 Millions \$
<b>Car fleet in 2016</b>	<b>38 652 000</b>
Length of the road network	978,000 km
Nber of vehicle for 1000 inhabitants	498
Time zone	GMT + 1
<b>Number of persons killed on the road in 2015</b>	<b>3464</b>

France is the largest country in the EU, stretching from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. The landscape is diverse, with mountains in the east and south, including the Alpine peak of Mont Blanc (4 810 m) which is Western Europe's highest point. Lowland France consists of four river basins, the Seine in the north, the Loire and the Garonne flowing westwards and the Rhône, which flows from Lake Geneva to the Mediterranean Sea.

The president of the Republic has an important political role. He chairs the meetings of the Council of Ministers (cabinet), and retains overall responsibility in key areas of foreign affairs and defence. The day-to-day running of the country is in the hands of the prime minister. The president is elected by direct popular vote for a period of five years. The parliament consists of a National Assembly, directly elected every five years, and a Senate whose members are chosen by an electoral college. France has an advanced industrial economy and an efficient farm sector. Main activities include automobile manufacture, aerospace, information technology, electronics, chemicals and pharmaceuticals and fashion. France has produced some of the continent's most influential writers and thinkers from Descartes and Pascal in the 17th century, to Rousseau and Voltaire in the 18th, Balzac, Baudelaire and Flaubert in the 19th and Sartre and Camus in the 20th. In the last two centuries it has given the art world the works of Renoir, Monet, Cezanne, Gauguin, Matisse and Braque, to name but a few.

French cuisine is one of the finest in Europe; cooking and eating are part of French culture and lifestyle.

## Automotive expertise in France

Automotive expertise is a technical field which started in France in the thirties in order to help insurers in the imputation (link between the claim made and the mentioned damage), the causes (quality of the opposing party, intern cause, etc.) and the cost of damage compensation. This field has become professional in the sixties with the compulsory insurance imposed to terrestrial motor vehicles owners. Since then the professions of insurer and automotive expert have been experiencing a significant development which reached its peak in the late eighties. In 1972 was created the 1st automotive expert degree.

In 1995, the degree was replaced by a diploma. The total number of vehicles and claims has started to decrease due to the combined effects of vehicles sophistication, improvement of the road network, the raise of awareness regarding “lack of road safety as national concern” and the crackdown of law infringements.

From that moment on, the automotive expert has started to diversify his business, oriented towards safety (VGA\* procedure, then VEI and since 1st January 2009, VE for damaged vehicle), the audit of fleets (assessment of damage consecutive to rentals) and the analysis of defaults causes.

Today any expert in France must have achieved a BTS (two-year higher education diploma) in the specialty (AVA or MCI). Then he/she must spend one year as professional experience in automotive repair (which can be replaced by a year of studies after the above mentioned diploma.) to get the status of “Trainee expert in automotive”. Thus the trainee expert fulfills some assessment tasks and even drafts and expertise report, but always under the responsibility of an official automotive expert. After a minimum of 24-months internship in an automotive expert firm, the trainee is authorized to sit for the last part of his diploma sophisticated vehicles, based on technical subjects (law, assessment, test of roadworthiness). If he gets the required marks, the trainee will become automotive expert and will be registered on the “national list of automotive experts”. This list is controlled and updated by the Ministry.

## Professional Associations



**UPEAS**

**Latest update**  
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