

QUICK FACTS AND INSIGHTS FRANCE

Economic environment

Population:	61million
Internet penetration:	47% of the population use the internet
GDP 2006 (PPP):	US\$2,009 billion
GDP growth:	c. 2%

France is the world's 7th largest economy, and 3rd within Europe. The economy is expected to continue to grow at a rate of around 2% p.a. Although France has one of the lower internet penetrations within Europe, use of the internet is becoming much more common and is particularly popular amongst the more affluent groups.

Source: Economist / ETC

French outbound travel trends

- France is the world's fifth top market in terms of spend on international travel. Traditionally holidays have been taken domestically, but outbound holiday-taking is now increasing and is forecast to continue to grow in the coming years.
- The most popular type of outbound holiday for French people is a beach holiday. However, they are also keen touring holidaymakers, and enjoy learning about different cultures and discovering new places.
- Good weather is an important factor in French people's holiday decision making – a preference reflected in their choice of destinations.
- Traditionally there has been a bias towards the summer for their main holidays. However, shorter trips such as city breaks are taken more widely through the year.
- The average duration of foreign holidays can range from around a week to up to two weeks (for a touring holiday)
- Like other countries, use of the internet for planning and booking holidays is growing. However travel agents are still an important method of booking and source of recommendation.

Scotland's visitors

- In Scotland, the most popular activities amongst French people are the classic touring activities of exploring the scenery, visiting cities and sightseeing. Walking / hiking is also popular. Scotland's culture and people are also highlights of visits by French people.
- The duration of holidays to Scotland varies from around 10 to 12 nights in the summer and around 4-7 nights in the shoulder season.
- Many of our French visitors organise their holidays to Scotland independently – the internet is the key source of planning information, while online booking and booking direct with accommodation and travel providers are popular.
- The main form of travel to Scotland is by air, followed by ferry (with their car). B&Bs are the most frequent choice of accommodation and camping is also popular, as value for money is a particularly sensitive issue for the French.
- Scotland's French visitors are spread throughout the age ranges. They tend to travel as couples and are from the mid to high social groups. While a proportion might have visited Scotland before, the majority are first-time visitors to Scotland. Therefore, providing practical and inspiring information to them is a must.

For more information on Scotland's visitors from France, visit www.visitscotland.org