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La France à la loupe

Tourism in France

In an increasingly competitive environment, France has persisted as **the world's number one tourist destination** with 9.4% of global travellers, followed by Spain with 6.9% and the United States with 6.1%. The number of foreign tourists staying for one night minimum has risen from 67.3 million in 1997 to 79 million in 2006, which is 2.7% more than in 2005. Foreign tourists are mainly from Europe: 17.3% from the United Kingdom, 16.5% from Germany and 12.4% from Belgium and Luxembourg.

TOURISM POLICY

France's tourism policy is conducted by the Minister of State, attached to the Minister for the Economy, Finance and Employment, responsible for Consumer Affairs and Tourism. It was essentially defined at two interministerial committee meetings on tourism in 2003 and 2004 and has **three major thrusts**:

- Strengthening France as a destination so as to increase tourist visits;
- Furthering the tourism economy by adapting what France has to offer to tourists' demands through quality-related measures;
- Better ensuring access for everyone to holidays in promoting social tourism.

To **strengthen France as a tourist destination**, promotional activities are developed by **Maison de la France**, a structure established in 1987. It includes the State, local and regional authorities, professionals working in tourism and in other major sectors of the French economy. It manages public information, commercial promotion, media relations and public relations operations, analysis of markets and communication and advertising campaigns.

Promoting quality in tourism services is a national priority. To do so, a **Plan Qualité Tourisme** (quality tourism plan) has been developed along with a “**Qualité Tourisme™**” brand. This Plan concerns the following services: accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies, offices of tourism, transportation and business tourism. This allows for more exposure for tourism services and better commercialisation. In November 2006, some 2,600 establishments bore this brand. It will soon expand to include recreational activities and tourist sites.

Social tourism is also a priority for the government so that everyone can benefit from holidays. The aim is to give a broader coherence to social action and to focus on specific groups such as seniors, disabled people and poor families. The **National Holiday Vouchers Agency** (ANCV) plays a vital role in achieving this aim. It issues holiday vouchers and reimburses local government and service providers.

In January 2005, three government bodies (Agence Française de l’Ingénierie Touristique, Observatoire National du Tourisme and the Service d’Etudes et d’Aménagement Touristique de la Montagne) merged to create the public interest group ODIT-France (French Agency for Tourism Observation, Development and Engineering). It helps those working in tourism to adapt their services to demand. It is a platform of expertise, analysis and advice for all public and private players in tourism, in France and abroad.

LEGISLATION

In 2000, it was decided that all legal regulations concerning tourism should be gathered together. The law of 2 July 2003 authorised the government to use the promulgation of official orders to adopt the legislative part of the tourism code. Order 2004-1351 of 20 December 2004 on the legislative part was ratified by [Law 2006-437 of 14 April 2006 on various tourism-related provisions](#). Lastly, this was achieved through the decrees 2006-1228 and 2006-1229 of 6 October 2006 concerning the regulatory part.

The tourism code contains four books:

- Book I: Overall organization of tourism
- Book II: Tourism activities and occupations
- Book III: Accommodation and facilities
- Book IV: Holiday funding and tourism taxation

It enabled the tourism industry to improve tourist conditions and consumer protection, develop quality and security, and adapt the regulatory regimes of overseas territorial units.

BUDGET

Tourism is **a pillar of the French economy**, it accounts for 6.3% of GDP and generates 2 million jobs directly or indirectly. Tourism is the third leading sector when it comes to job creation. Tourism revenues stood at €35 billion in 2006 versus €32.8 billion in 2004.

In 2006, with 6.3% of global revenues, France ranked third in the world in terms of revenue, behind the United States (11.7%) and Spain (7%).

In France's finance law, the "tourism programme" is managed by the interministerial mission in charge of policy for French territories. In 2007, the budget rose 12% with regards to 2003.

[Source: Minister of State responsible for Consumer Affairs and Tourism]

MOST VISITED TOURIST SITES

The three **most popular regions for tourists** are Ile-de-France, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Rhône-Alpes.

The five most visited **cultural sites** (for which entries are counted) are the Louvre Museum, the Eiffel Tower, the Georges Pompidou Centre, the château of Versailles and the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie. The five most visited **non-cultural sites** are Disneyland Paris, Parc Asterix, Futuroscope, Parc du Puy du Fou and the zoo in the Bois de Boulogne.

For more information

WEBSITES

➤ **Minister of State responsible for Consumer Affairs and Tourism** [in French]

<http://www.tourisme.gouv.fr>

➤ **Blog of the Tourism Directorate** [in French]

<http://www.debats.tourisme.gouv.fr/>

➤ **Tourism quality, brand for professionals in the tourism sector** [in French]

<http://www.qualite-tourisme.gouv.fr/>

➤ **Veille Info Tourisme**: A portal to access information and share knowledge in the tourism sector [in French]

<http://www.veilleinfotourisme.fr/>

➤ **Maison de la France - France Guide: Official website for tourism in France** [in French]

<http://fr.franceguide.com/>

➤ **Tourism Observation, Development and Engineering (ODIT France)** [in French]

<http://www.odit-france.fr/>

➤ **National Federation of Offices of Tourism and Tourist Promotion Offices** [in French]

http://www.tourisme.fr/recherche/e_index.htm

LEGISLATION

➤ Tourism code, Legifrance website [in French]

[http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/WAspad/RechercheSimpleCode?commun=C
TOURI&code=](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/WAspad/RechercheSimpleCode?commun=C&code=TOURI)

➤ **Law 2006-437 of 14 April 2006 on various tourism provisions:** Legislative survey on the French Senate's website [in French].

http://www.senat.fr/dossierleg/pjl04-354.html#objet_texte_complet

PUBLICATIONS

➤ **Le tourisme : un phénomène économique** / Pierre Py. - *Les Etudes de la Documentation française*, no. 5261, september 2007 [in French].

➤ **Mémento du tourisme 2007** / Tourism Directorate, 2007 [in French].

http://www.tourisme.gouv.fr/fr/z2/stat/memento/memento_2007.jsp

➤ **Bilan de l'année touristique 2006** / Ministère délégué au Tourisme, February 2007 [in French].

http://www.tourisme.gouv.fr/fr/actualites/att00015591/DP_bilan_touristique2006.pdf

➤ **Les chiffres clés du tourisme** / Tourism Directorate, 2007 edition [in French].

http://www.tourisme.gouv.fr/fr/z2/stat/chiffres/att00009212/ccles_fr.pdf

In English:

http://www.tourisme.gouv.fr/fr/z2/stat/chiffres/att00009212/ccles_gb.pdf

➤ **Tourisme et patrimoine** / Valéry Patin. - *Les Etudes de la Documentation française*, no. 5211, 2005 [in French].