



General Information



Population

68 287 487 (World Bank 2023)

68 373 433 (STAT FR 2024)



Immigration

417 613 (Eurostat 2023)

169 000 (STAT FR 2020)



Emigration

2 341 908 (UN Emigration Stock 2020)

29 000 (STAT FR 2020)



Working-age population

41 973 641 (World Bank 2023)

29 346 000 (STAT FR 2020)



Unemployment rate

7.3 % (World Bank 2023)

7.4 % (STAT FR 2024)



GDP

3 051 831 611 384.8 current prices USD (World Bank 2023)

2 608 100 000 000 current prices EUR (STAT FR 2023)



Refugees and IDPs

Refugees

689 273 (UNHCR 2024)

54 000 (OFPRA 2021)

Asylum Seekers

71 169 (UNHCR 2024)

103 000 (OFPRA 2021)

IDPs

0 (UNHCR 2024)



Citizenship

By Birth

No (GLOBALCIT 2022)

By Descent

Yes (GLOBALCIT 2022)

Years of Residency

5 (GLOBALCIT 2022)



Territory

643 801 km² (CIA World Factbook)

Data from international sources is updated automatically as it becomes available.

Migration Authorities

Responsible Body

Ministry of Interior

Line Ministries

Ministry of Labour, Employment and Inclusion

Ministry of Higher Education and Research

Ministry of Education

Agencies

OFPRO (French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons)

OFII (French Office for Immigration and Integration)

INSEE (The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies)

Key Policy Documents

Code of entry and stay of the foreigners and asylum right

2018 Law for a controlled immigration, an effective right of asylum and a successful integration

2018 Law enabling the effective implementation of the European asylum system

2016 Law on the right of foreigners in France

The executive order no. 2020-1733 of December 16, 2020 on the legislative part of the Code on the Entry and Stay of Foreigners and the Right of Asylum

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000042754770>

The decree of March 15, 2022 creating a personal data processing called "Census of accommodation and housing offers for displaced persons from Ukraine"

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000045422760>

The decree no. 2021-360 of March 31, 2021 concerning the employment of a foreign worker

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043311005>

The decree No. 2021-520 of April 29, 2021, amending the Code on the Entry and Stay of Foreigners and the Right of Asylum in the version resulting from Decree No. 2020-1734 of December 16, 2020

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043458986>

France, one of the main migration destinations, has a two-century **history of immigration** due to the industrial and political revolutions. The country is projected to remain an attractive destination based on the **Gallup potential net migration index**. On 1 January 2022, France had a population of **67.8** million inhabitants. The net migration of **155.000** people contribute to nearly two-thirds of the population increase, which amounts to around 0.25% per year.

In 2021, **8.7 million** people living in France were born abroad, representing **12.8%** of the total population. Of them, **1.7** million were French nationals born abroad. Another **7** million were immigrants, **4.5** million of whom were foreign citizens and **2.5** million were persons who have earned French citizenship. In addition, the total foreign population included **0.8** million people born in France to foreign citizens.

France's colonial history and geographic location greatly determine the major countries of origin of immigrants. In 2021, **47.5 %** of immigrants in France were born in an African country, and **30%** were born in the Maghreb, which represents a stable proportion since the 1980s. Meanwhile, the share of immigrants from Europe in France is decreasing. It reached **33%** in 2021 compared to **66%** in 1975. Since 1999, the origins of European immigrants are increasingly varied, with a growing share of immigrants born in Eastern Europe and the United Kingdom. In particular, the demand for residency in France among British citizens skyrocketed after Brexit, from **12.678** in 2017 to **155.243** in 2022. Immigration from sub-Saharan Africa is rather recent and mainly concerns countries formerly under the French administration. The most common **countries of birth** of immigrants are Algeria, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia, Italy, Turkey, and Spain. Together with the UK and China, these countries made up the majority of the **88.300** immigration flow recorded in 2020. In the next year, nationals of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia received the majority of **270.925** first-time residence permits issued in France. Meanwhile, the overall number of valid residence permits in 2022 amounted to **3.567.694**.

Based on 2018 data, half of the working-age immigrant population entered France before 1998. Out of those who arrived at the age of 15 or older, **nearly half** claim to have emigrated for family reasons. The share of migrants coming to France through family reunification is consistently high. In 2021, non-EU nationals received as many as 88.225 first-time residence permits for family reasons, followed by 36.560 permits issued on economic grounds.

Economic migration has intensified since 2010. A substantial proportion of immigrants work in such **sectors** as personal and community services, hotels, restaurants, construction and public buildings. Three-quarters of the 39.131 first permits issued for economic reasons in 2019 were issued to salaried workers, which corresponds to **72.5%** of permanent job contracts, **13%** were granted to scientists and researchers, and **11%** were issued in the context of seasonal or temporary migration. Overall, today's immigrants in France are more educated. However, immigrants often face a higher unemployment rate. In 2021, the unemployment rate of immigrants was **12.7% vs 7.9%** rate of the general population. Moreover, immigrants from the Maghreb and other African countries have a significantly higher risk of feeling overqualified, but they also face the highest unemployment rate of **15.3%**.

In 2021, France issued **85.080** permits to international students. During the 2020-2021 academic year, **278.278** international students - mainly from Morocco, China, and Algeria - were enrolled in a degree and non-degree studies in France.

The situation in the area of international protection has evolved over the past decade leading to the rise in the number of asylum applications and the change in the main origin countries of applicants. From 2010 until 2021, the number of asylum seekers increased two-fold from **52.762** to **103.164**. Apart from Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which also featured among applicants ten years ago, other important origin countries in 2021 included Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Turkey, Albania, Georgia, Nigeria, and Comoros. In 2021, France granted protection to **54.384** persons and hosted close to **half a million** persons under different forms of protection.

The resettlement programs carried out by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons involved 2028 people and missions to Lebanon (5), Turkey (4), Egypt (3), Jordan (1), Rwanda (4), Chad (1), Cameroon (2) and Ethiopia (1). The assistance program initiated in Greece in 2020 is aimed at providing support to unaccompanied minors, vulnerable families and beneficiaries of international protection in France, involved **341** people in 2021.

In 2022, France faced an inflow of people fleeing the war in Ukraine. By early August 2022, over **96.000** Ukrainian nationals obtained temporary protection in France. **This status** is granted for one year and can be extended throughout the European Union. It allows them to enjoy the right of residence, access to the labour market, access to housing, social assistance, medical assistance, legal custody for unaccompanied minors as well as access to education. Beyond that, Ukrainian refugees in France can also benefit from personalized housing assistance (APL). Depending on their situation, families can also receive various family allowances to support their families.

In terms of irregular migration, the number of arrests of foreigners in the irregular situation reached its ten-year maximum of **125.000** in 2019 but then declined by 20% due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A similar trend was observed with regard to returns. Meanwhile, the number of non-admissions on the contrary increased by over 40% to **78.542** in 2020 compared to the previous year. The **Ministry of Interior** shows that **16.819** undocumented migrants left the French territory in 2021. There were **10.091** forced returns (deportations and readmission combined), as well as **1.415** voluntary departures and **2001** spontaneous departures. Beyond that, the number of migrants crossing the English Channel tripled in 2021 compared to 2020, partly due to the reinforcement of controls in Calais and in the Eurotunnel.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **1.614.772** French citizens are registered in consular offices abroad, but an estimated **2.5 million to 3.5 million** live outside France, predominantly in Switzerland, the US, the UK, Belgium and Canada. Over the period 2005-2015, the number of French nationals leaving France has been growing at a 3% per year, amounting to about **60.000** people, excluding some **300.000** cross-border workers. People are leaving for various reasons including economic opportunities (China, the

US) and historical links with France (Morocco, Algeria, Israel, Canada), but also due to the cost of living, and the interest in other people and cultures. Most French emigrants settle in Europe and North America. These are generally skilled people: financial executives, engineers, administrative, health and education professionals, IT graduates and researchers. In 2019, **58%** of French nationals living abroad held a higher education degree.

On the **bilateral level**, France has concluded agreements with 12 countries that allow former students holding certain degrees to seek and obtain employment in France. The country also has signed bilateral agreements with New Zealand, Argentina, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Montenegro, Serbia, Gabon, Canada, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the US on the exchange of young professionals, who receive work permits to gain professional and paid working experience abroad. Citizens of Benin, the Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gabon and Montenegro are eligible for a multi-year residence permit with the mention "talent passport", which is granted for significant and sustainable participation in the economic development of France and the country of origin. Nationals from Benin, Burkina Faso, the Republic of Congo, Gabon and Tunisia can also obtain a long-term residence permit as an "employee" or a short-term permit as a "temporary worker" if no suitable candidate is available in the French labour market.

At the international level, France is a party to many international legal instruments protecting migrants, their families and their rights. It adopted the Global Compact for Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. **France** is one of the 21 states that voted for a solidarity mechanism with EU front-line Member States, listed as the first step of the New EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum. The country is currently **debating the new provision** on immigration that shall become part of the future law of orientation and programming. It shall **foresee** the "double penalty" for foreign criminals (sentencing and expulsion), the quicker decision of expulsion of rejected asylum seekers and adoption of additional quotas by industry.

latest update: 30 September 2022

Relevant Publications

UNICEF, France. Migration profiles Part I. Global legal instruments related to international migration

Les chiffres clés de l'immigration. 2020. Ministry of Interior

Frederick Cooper, 2022, Citizenship and difference in France: colonial histories and postcolonial controversies, *Citizenship Studies*, 26:4-5, 418-425, DOI: 10.1080/13621025.2022.2091222

Cris Beauchemin, Mathieu Ichou, Patrick Simon and the TeO2 team, 2022

Sabrina Volant, Gilles Pison, François Héran, 2019

Hippolyte d'Albis, Ekrame Boubtane, 2018

Elika Athari, Jérôme Lê (Insee), Yaël Brinbaum (Cnam - Laboratoire interdisciplinaire de sociologie économique - CEET), 2019