## FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

FRANCE

## THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE TODAY

Location	The French Republic is situated in western Europe. It is bounded to the north by the English Channel (la Manche), to the east by Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, to the south by Mediterranean Sea and Spain, and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean. The island of Corsica is part of Metropolitan France, while four overseas departments, two overseas 'collectivites territoriales' and four overseas territories also form an integral part of the Republic.
Cina	
Size	547,030 Sq. K.M. (211,199 Sq. miles). Land: 545,630 sq. km. and water: 1,400 sq. km. Note: Includes only metropolitan France; excludes the overseas administrative divisions.
Coastline	3,427 k.m.
Land boundaries	Total: 2,889 k.m.; Border countries: Andora 56.5 k.m., Belgium 620 k.m., Germany 451 k.m., Italy 488 k.m., Luxembourg 73 k.m., Monaco 4.4 k.m., Spain 623 k.m. and Switzerland 573 k.m.
Land use	Arable land: 33.46%, permanent crops: 2.03% and others: 64.51%
Irrigated land	26,000 sq. km.
Elevation extremes	Lowest point: Rhone River delta $-2$ m and highest point: Mont Blanc 4,807 m.
Maritime claims	Territorial sea: 12 nm, contiguous zone: 24 nm, exclusive economic zone: 200 nm (does not apply to the Mediterranean), and continental shelf: 200-m depth or to the depth of exploitation.
Population	68,305,148 estimated for 2022.
Population Density	112 per sq. km. estimated for 2022.
Population growth rate	0.32% estimated for 2022.
Life Expectancy at Birth	82.59 years (Male 79.53 Yrs. & Female 85.79 Yrs.) estimated for 2022.
Birth rate	11.66 births/1,000 populations estimated for 2022.
Death rate	9.54 deaths/1,000 populations estimated for 2022.
Literacy	99% (Male 99%, Female 99%).
Government	Republic.
Capital City	Paris
Other Large Cities	Marseilles, Lyons, Toulouse, Nice, Strasbourg, Nantes, Bordeaux, Montepellier, Rennes, Saint-Etienne, Le Havre, Rheims, Lille, Toulon, Grenoble, Brest, Dijon, Le Mans, Angers, Cloermont-Ferrand, Limoges, Amiens, Tours, Nimes etc.
Religion	Almost all French citizens profess Christianity, and about 80% are adherents of the Roman Catholic Church. Other Christian denominations are represented, and there are also Muslim and Jewish communities.
Language	The principal language is French, which has numerous regional dialects, and small minorities speak Breton and Basque.
Climate	The climate is temperate throughout the most of the country, but in the south it is of the Mediterranean type, with warm summers and mild winters. Temperatures in Paris are generally between 0°C (32°F) and 24°C (75°F).
International Relations	France is a member of the UN, the Council of Europe, NATO, WEU, EU, OSCE, OECD and the Pacific Community and is signatory to the Schengen Accord.
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# NATIONAL ECONOMY

France saw a robust recovery from the Covid-19 shock but is now facing the repercussions of Russia's war in Ukraine. In 2021, output rebounded by 6.8 percent and recovered to pre-crisis levels. The recovery was broad-based and faster than in most other European countries. While France is less directly exposed to the energy shock, the war in Ukraine is dampening the recovery by denting confidence and exacerbating supply-side difficulties. Staff expect growth of 2.6 percent for 2022. Inflation has surged over the past year, driven by supply chain bottlenecks and the energy price shock, but remains well-below peers thanks to energy price controls and subsidies. These and other measures to support purchasing power keep the fiscal deficit elevated despite the unwinding of Covid-19 support. While capacity utilization remains below pre-crisis levels, labor market conditions have further tightened. The banking sector has weathered the crisis soundly, though financial stability risks are increasing.

The large fiscal response to the energy price shock has cushioned the economic impact but has been costly, poorly targeted, and distortionary. Support totaling 2 percent of GDP in 2021-22 has been centered on households and largely channeled through untargeted, and thus costly, energy price measures and cash transfers. For 2023, the price cap is raised by 15 percent—with poorer households compensated upfront through cash transfers—while a more targeted fuel voucher ("chèque carburant") for households earning up to median income replaces the fuel subsidy ("remise carburant"). In parallel, energy bill support to firms will be scaled up, funded from a new infra-marginal rent tax and solidary contribution from energy producers. France's fiscal response to successive shocks over 2020-22 has been swift and effective but costly, narrowing its fiscal space and widening the public debt gap relative to Euro Area peers.

Staff projects growth at 0.7 percent in 2023, while inflation will remain persistent over the next two years as price controls ease. Near-term risks are titled to the downside stemming from a prolonged war and an escalation of sanctions and a further spike in gas and electricity prices, faster-than-expect monetary policy adjustments in Europe or elsewhere, and a deeper slowdown in the US or China. Over the medium-term, output will grow near potential but scarring from the pandemic and the energy shock will leave output some 2 percentage points below the pre-pandemic trend. The government sees unemployment, pension, and vocational training reforms, as well as measures to foster youth employment as key levers to raise labor supply and potential growth. The energy crisis also presents opportunities to accelerate the green transition.

#### **Executive Board Assessment**

In the course of Article IV consultation between IMF and France, Executive Directors of IMF agreed with the thrust of the staff appraisal. They noted that France saw a strong economic recovery from the Covid-19 shock but is now facing strong headwinds. While it has been less affected than most EU countries by the energy crisis due to a lower reliance on Russian gas and a strong policy response, economic activity is slowing sharply and inflation will remain persistent as energy price controls ease. Directors stressed that risks are titled to the downside stemming from possible further impacts of Russia's war in Ukraine, faster-than-expected monetary tightening and a deeper global slowdown.

Directors welcomed the effectiveness of the fiscal response to the energy shock in containing the impact on output and inflation but noted that its largely untargeted nature pushed up costs and reduced incentives to lower energy consumption. While many Directors agreed with the staff's recommendation for a modest fiscal tightening in 2023, including by accelerating the phase-out of energy price controls and better targeting support, a number of Directors saw merit in a more gradual adjustment with the exit from price controls conditional on market developments and the policy response at the regional level. Directors broadly agreed that a sustained expenditure-led fiscal consolidation over the medium term will be critical to rebuild buffers and bring debt on a firmly downward path while leaving space to accelerate green and digital investment. Noting that implementation of the unemployment benefit and pension reform plans could deliver part of the needed adjustment, they emphasized the need for additional reforms, including to rationalize tax expenditures and enhance spending efficiency.

Directors noted that the banking sector has weathered the crisis soundly, but global financial stability risks are increasing, including from the impact of the economic slowdown on corporate balance sheets, increased credit risk from energy intensive and inflation affected sectors, and a possible downturn in the housing market. Directors supported the authorities' decision to raise the counter-cyclical buffer to

guard against the buildup of financial stability risks but cautioned that the buffer should be promptly released should there be a sudden deterioration of financial conditions.

Directors urged continued action to reduce labor market frictions and increase labor supply. They welcomed the recently approved unemployment benefits reform and upcoming pension reform which will help raise the labor supply. In addition, Directors recommended policies to improve educational outcomes and alleviate skills mismatches.

Directors underscored the urgency of the transition to cleaner and more secure energy sources. They stressed the importance of streamlining regulatory and judicial procedures for renewable energy development and increasing carbon pricing while providing support for vulnerable households as part of a broader package of climate measures.

Directors commended the authorities for France's leadership in multilateral cooperation and looked forward to their continued leadership in addressing global challenges.

It is expected that the next Article IV consultation with France will be held on the standard 12-month cycle.

Table 1. France: Selected Economic Indicators, 2019-23								
			Projection					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023			
Real economy (change in percent)								
Real GDP	1.9	-7.9	6.8	2.6	0.7			
Domestic demand	2.1	-6.7	6.6	3.1	0.5			
Foreign balance (contr. to GDP growth)	-0.3	-1.0	0.0	-0.6	0.1			
CPI (year average)	1.3	0.5	2.1	5.9	5.0			
GDP deflator	1.2	2.9	1.3	2.6	3.5			
Public finance (percent of GDP)				1				
General government balance	-3.1	-9.0	-6.5	-5.0	-5.3			
Revenue	52.3	52.5	52.5	53.5	52.8			
Expenditure	55.4	61.5	59.1	58.4	58.1			
Primary balance	-1.7	-7.8	-5.2	-3.2	-3.7			
Structural balance (percent of pot. GDP)	-2.1	-5.8	-5.2	-4.4	-4.5			
General government gross debt	97.4	114.7	112.6	111.6	112.0			
Labor market (percent change)								
Employment	0.8	-0.3	1.7	0.4	-0.1			
Labor force	0.1	-0.7	1.6	0.0	0.0			
Unemployment rate (percent)	8.4	8.0	7.9	7.5	7.6			
Credit and interest rates								
(percent)								
Growth of credit to the private non- financial sector	5.3	8.1	2.5	3.8	4.2			
Money market rate (Euro area)	-0.4							
Government bond yield, 10-year	0.1							
Balance of payments (percent of GDP)								
Current account	0.5	-1.8	0.4	-1.5	-1.6			
Trade balance of goods and services	-0.9	-1.8	-1.2	-1.7	-1.5			
Exports of goods and services	32.7	28.4	31.2	39.3	40.7			
Imports of goods and services	- 33.6	-30.2	-32.4	-41.1	-42.2			
FDI (net)	1.1	0.2	-0.4	0.4	0.8			
Official reserves (US\$ billion)	69.7							

Exchange rates					
Euro per U.S. dollar, period average	0.89				
NEER, ULC-styled (2005=100,	97.1				
+=appreciation)					
REER, ULC-based (2005=100,					
+=appreciation)					
Potential output and output gap					
Potential output (change in percent)	1.0	-3.3	3.7	1.5	1.0
Memo: per working age person		-3.2	4.1	1.5	1.0
Output gap	0.0	-4.7	-1.9	-0.8	-1.1

**Sources:** Haver Analytics, INSEE, Banque de France, and IMF Staff calculations.

**"NATIONAL ECONOMY"** is based on IMF Executive Board Concludes 2022 Article IV Consultation with France January 30, 2023.

# **FOREIGN TRADE**

**France's** total exports in 2017 were of the order of US\$ 523,385 million. It increased to US\$ 585,148 million in 2021. Exports during the period from 2017 to 2021, in terms of percentage, grew highest (19.77%) in 2021 and fell maximum (-12.19) in 2020 in comparison with 2020 and 2019 respectively. The annual average compound growth rate of export worked out at 2.83%.

Imports, on the other hand, were of the order of US\$ 714,842 million in 2021 while in 2017 it was US\$ 613,133 million. Imports during the period from 2017 to 2021, in terms of percentage, grew highest (22.66%) in 2021 and fell maximum (-9.40%) in 2020 as compared to 2020 and 2019 respectively. The annual average compound rate of growth of import worked out at 3.91%.

Volume of trade registered an annual average (compound) growth rate of 3.42% from US\$ 1,136,518 million in 2017 to US\$ 1,299,990 million in 2021.

France faced a deficit balance of trade payment during the entire period. France's export and import, volume and balance of trade between 2017 and 2021 along with their growth rates are given in **Table-I**.

France is a leading trading nation and has grown into one of the world's foremost exporting countries, with the value of exports representing more than one-fifth of its GDP. Main export items of France are metals, chemicals, industrial equipment, consumer goods and agricultural products. The country is also a major importer, especially of machinery, chemicals and chemical products, tropical agricultural products, and traditional industrial goods such as clothes and textiles etc. The high level of imports led the country to a trade deficit for the entire period under review. More than three-fifths of French exports and imports are destined for or originate in EU countries, of which Germany is easily the most important. Other principal trading partners of France are Italy, UK, Belgium-Luxembourg, Finland, Japan, Netherlands, Greece, Hong Kong, USA, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, and Russia etc.

The main international airports are at Paris (Charles de Gaulle), Paris (Orly), Bordeaux (Merignac), Lyons (Satolas), Marseiles-Provence, Nice-Cote d'Azur, Strasbourg (Entzheim), Toulouse (Blagnac) and Nantes (Atlantique). The following had international flights to only a few destinations in 1998: Brest, Caen, Carcassonne, Clermont-Ferrand, Deauville, Le Havre, Le Touquet, Lille, Pau, Rennes, Rouen and St Etienne. The national airline is Air France.

The principal ports, in terms of quantity of cargo, were Marseille, Le Havre and Dunkerque, and the principal passenger port is Calais. The six major seaports (Marseille, Le Havre, Dunkerque, Rouen, Nantes-Saint-Nazaire and Bordeaux) are operated by autonomous authorities, although the State retains supervisory powers.

### **BILATERAL TRADE WITH INDIA**

Indo-France bilateral trade in 2017-18 was of the order of Rs. 73,627.09 crores. It increased to Rs.92,679.32 crores in 2021-22. The annual compound growth rate of volume of trade during the period from 2017-18 to 2021-22 was 5.92%. India faced a deficit balance of trade during the said period except the last two years (**see table II**). The average annual compound growth rates of exports and imports worked out at 11.95% and 0.60% respectively.

India's exports to, and imports from France of Merchandise Goods between 2017-18 and 2021-22 along with their growth rates are presented in **Table II.** 

India's top ten merchandise goods exported to and imported from France, during 2017-18 to 2021-22, along with their growth rates are depicted in **Table III & IV** respectively.

## SOME IMPORTANT LINKS

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### Names and addresses of the organizations engaged in foreign trade in France are:-

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#### Source

The Statesman Year Book, the Europa World Year Book, ITC, Monthly Bulletin on Statistics UN Publication, IMF, VisaHQ,World Bank.org, BBC News, the World Fact Book, World Development Indicator, MEA, and D.G.C.I & S etc.

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			TABLE - I								
FRANCE'S TOTAL EXPORTS AND IMPORTS, VOLUME AND BALANCE OF TRADE											
			<b>BETWEEN 2</b>	<u>017 TO 2021.</u>							
					(Figures in US MIL	LION DOLLARS)					
Year	Exports	Percentage	Import	Percentage	Volume	Percentage	Balance				
		Growth in		Growth in	of	Growth in	of				
		Exports		Imports	Trade	Vol. of Trade	Trade				
2017	523385		613133		11,36,518		-89748				
2018	568536	8.63	659375	7.54	12,27,911	8.04	-90839				
2019	556364	-2.14	643208	<i>-2.45</i>	11,99,572	-2.31	-86844				
2020	488562	<i>-12.19</i>	582775	<i>-9.40</i>	10,71,337	-10.69	<i>-94213</i>				
2021	585148	19.77	714842	22.66	12,99,990	21.34	-129694				
Annual											
Compound											
Growth Rate	2.83		3.91		3.42						
NOTE :	Figures	relate to calen	dar year, Janua	ry to Decembe	r.						
SOURCE :	UN COMTRA	DE PUBLICA	TION								

		TABLE - II	•								
IND	INDIA'S EXPORT TO AND IMPORT FROM FRANCE OF MERCHANDISE										
	GOODS DURING 2017-2018 TO 2021-2022										
	(Value in Rs. CRORES)										
Exports	Percentage	Import	Percentage	Volume	Percentage	Balance					
	Growth in		Growth in	of	Growth in	of					
	Exports		Imports	Trade	Vol. of Trade	Trade					
31594.66		42032.43	-	73627.09		-10437.77					
36594.13	15.82	46599.41	10.87	83193.54	12.99	-10005.28					
36134.58	-1.26	42116.79	-9.62	78251.37	-5.94	-5982.21					
35377.24	-2.10	30939.46	-26.54	66316.70	-15.25	4437.78					
49626.06	40.28	43053.26	39.15	92679.32	39.75	6572.80					
11.95		0.60		5.92							
Figures r	elate to Financi	al Year April to									
Directorate	e General of Cor	nmercial Intellig	gence & Statistic	сs,							
Ministry o	of Commerce &	Industry, Kolka	ta 700 107.								

			TABLE -III								
	INDIA'S MAJOR ITEMS OF MERCHANDISE EXPORT TO FRANCE										
	2017-2018 TO 2021-2022 AND THEIR GROWTH RATES (Value in Rs. CRORES										
SI. No.	Name of the Merchandise Commodities	Value	of Exports			Annual	Growth Ra	tes			
		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	18-19 ove	19-20 over	20-21 over	21-22 ove	
							2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
1	Petroleum Products	2270.77	3904.44	4081.55	2160.72	5828.30	71.94	4.54	-47.06	169.74	
	Share in total export	7.19	10.67	11.30	6.11	11.74					
2	Electric Machinery & Equipments	1603.48	1827.74	2707.71	2018.22	4116.61	13.99	48.15	-25.46	103.97	
	Share in total export	5.08	4.99	7.49	5.70	8.30					
3	Drugs Formulations, Biologicals	1136.58	1254.81	1583.48	2197.77	2984.92	10.40	26.19	38.79	35.82	
	Share in total export	3.60	3.43	4.38	6.21	6.01					
4	RMG Cotton Including Accessories	3042.63	3123.22	2624.25	2246.24	2890.45	2.65	-15.98	-14.40	28.68	
	Share in total export	9.63	8.53	7.26	6.35	5.82					
5	Aircraft, Spacecraft & Parts	1611.13	1659.44	1175.09	1404.65	1479.12	3.00	-29.19	19.54	5.30	
	Share in total export	5.10	4.53	3.25	3.97	2.98					
6	Products Of Iron & Steel	925.32	1024.79	1039.22	884.49	1168.34	10.75	1.41	-14.89	32.09	
	Share in total export	2.93	2.80	2.88	2.50	2.35				1	
7	Telecom Instruments	925.32	91.80	116.28	1091.20	1100.04	-90.08	26.67	838.42	0.81	
	Share in total export	2.93	0.25	0.32	3.08	2.22					
8	Cotton Fabrics, Madeups Etc.	620.13	682.21	715.69	764.55	1088.26	10.01	4.91	6.83	42.34	
	Share in total export	1.96	1.86	1.98	2.16	2.19					
9	Gold And Other Precs. Metl. Jewellery	447.48	493.85	675.07	699.00	1077.36	10.36	36.70	3.54	54.13	
	Share in total export	1.42	1.35	1.87	1.98	2.17					
10	Consumer Elecronics	29.33	164.76	208.06	439.55	1072.31	461.75	26.28	111.26	143.96	
	Share in total export	0.09	0.45	0.58	1.24	2.16					
	Total export to FRANCE	31594.66	36594.13	36134.58	35377.24	49626.06	15.82	-1.26	-2.10	40.28	
	NOTE : Figures relate to Financial Yea	r, April to M	larch.								
	SOURCE : Directorate General of Com	mercial Inte	lligence & S	tatistics. M	inistry of Co	ommerce &	Industry. K	olkata : 70	0 107.		

			TABLE ·	-IV						
	INDIA'S N		EMS OF ME		ISE IMPOF	RT FROM F	RANCE			
		2017-2018 1	O 2021-202	22 AND THI		TH RATES		( Value in	Rs. CROF	RES)
SI.	Name of the Merchandise Commodities Value of Imports Annual Growth Rate								es	
No		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	18-19 over	19-20 over	20-21 over	21-22 over
							2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
1	Aircraft, Spacecraft, Parts	21232.83	23616.88	16921.36	7077.44	15959.48	11.23	-28.35	-58.17	125.50
	Share in total imports	50.52	50.68	40.18	22.88	37.07				
2	Electric Machinery & Equipments	1656.29	2022.63	3670.48	1853.47	3907.13	22.12	81.47	-49.50	110.80
	Share in total imports	3.94	4.34	8.72	5.99	9.08				
3	Indl. Machinery For Dairy Etc.	1081.27	1303.49	1211.16	999.13	1310.19	20.55	-7.08	-17.51	31.13
	Share in total imports.	2.57	2.80	2.88	3.23	3.04				
4	Electronic Components	845.26	987.21	1037.41	1210.21	1265.79	16.79	5.09	16.66	4.59
	Share in total import	2.01	2.12	2.46	3.91	2.94				
5	Petroleum Products	1034.66	641.83	866.23	1449.36	1223.07	-37.97	34.96	67.32	-15.61
	Share in total import	2.46	1.38	2.06	4.68	2.84				
6	Organic Chemicals	783.84	848.20	835.65	1102.07	1193.03	8.21	-1.48	31.88	8.25
	Share in total import	1.86	1.82	1.98	3.56	2.77				
7	Plastic Raw Materials	733.23	625.62	653.40	795.82	966.16	-14.68	4.44	21.80	21.40
	Share in total import	1.74	1.34	1.55	2.57	2.24				
8	Electronics Instruments	725.29	1003.78	1223.62	888.65	946.94	38.40	21.90	-27.38	6.56
	Share in total import	1.73	2.15	2.91	2.87	2.20				
9	Drugs Formulations, Biologicals	788.40	320.31	978.22	1253.44	933.65	-59.37	205.40	28.13	-25.51
	Share in total import	1.88	0.69	2.32	4.05	2.17				
10	<b>Residul Chemical &amp; Allied Products</b>	782.22	970.60	985.26	894.55	925.66	24.08	1.51	-9.21	3.48
	Share in total import	1.86	2.08	2.34	2.89	2.15				
	Total import from FRANCE	42032.43	46599.41	42116.79	30939.46	43053.26	10.87	-9.62	-26.54	39.15
	<b>NOTE</b> : Figures relate to Financial	Year, April to	o March.							
	SOURCE : Directorate General of Corr	nmercial Inte	elligence & S	Statistics, Mi	nistry of Cor	nmerce & In	dustry, Kolka	ata : 700 10	7.	