

FRANCE & THE PROMOTION OF FRENCH WORLDWIDE

SUPPORT FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS FOR THE FRENCH LANGUAGE WORLDWIDE

- Close to 700 men and women work to promote the French language worldwide through France's external cultural network.
- Almost 1 million people take French classes at the 132 Instituts français and 445 Alliance française teaching centres worldwide.
- 300,000 students study in institutions with French programmes situated in 130 countries. More than half of these students do not hold French nationality.
- France spends more than 600 million euros each year promoting French worldwide. It is the largest contributor country to the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF).



FRENCH, A LANGUAGE FOR TOMORROW

Major changes in the world are a source of new challenges, but are also of benefit to the French language. Globalization is an opportunity for linguistic communities to become self-aware and to assert themselves, as shown by the remarkable development of the International Organisation of La Francophonie, which now counts 75 member States and governments. The arrival of a new, multipolar world, under the influence of emerging countries, is shaping a new cultural and linguistic pluralism. The Internet revolution provides a global platform for expression, creation and sharing for major languages like French, the third language on Wikipedia and Facebook. African growth should bring the number of French-speakers in the world to more than half a billion by 2050. The Arab Spring, in which French-speaking countries play a critical role, has put French at the heart of history in the making. Yet all these changes will only have the expected effect if we are capable of seizing the opportunities that are available to us. This is why the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs has made promoting the French language a priority.



↓ School in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

French, a global language

With 220 million speakers, French is one of the world's 10 most widely spoken languages.

A language spoken on the five continents

■ The French language's major advantage is its geographical reach. Like English and Spanish, the French language has a strong presence on the five continents, being used in some 30 countries.

A presence in education systems the world over

■ French is taught as a foreign language in most of the world's national education systems. It is the second most learnt language after English. More than 100 million students study French with close to half a million language teachers. 300,000 young people in 130 countries enjoy French schooling in French overseas schools.

A working language in European and international forums

■ French is one of the main working languages of the European institutions and also one of the two United Nations working languages. French is also a working language at the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), and in most African organizations.

A language boosted by the dynamism of French-speaking countries

■ French benefits from France's "image", its role in Europe and on the international scene, its dynamism as the world's fifth industrial power, and its cultural outreach which makes it the most visited country in the world. France is also the third country in terms of hosting foreign students, and the country whose literature and cinema are most widespread, behind those of the English-speaking countries. French also draws strength from the wealth of French-speaking cultures and economies. French is increasingly learnt abroad in order to take part in cultural and economic exchanges with French-speaking countries in America and Africa.

5 priorities for the promotion of the French language

1- Consolidating the French-speaking area in Africa and the Mediterranean

■ In the long term, the global influence of the French language will first be decided in the French-speaking space, particularly in Africa and the Mediterranean. According to OIF forecasts, the number of French-speakers in the world will increase from today's 220 million to 750 million in 2025, with 80% living in Africa. Such results will only be possible if countries with high population growth pass on the French language to younger generations.

2- Promoting French as a foreign language in the rest of the world, particularly in European and G20 countries

■ Although a multipolar world is a great opportunity for linguistic diversity, it also means new linguistic competition. In this new language market, France is seeking to strengthen the place of French as a foreign language in world education systems, including in European and G20 countries. It is also developing a French bilingual teaching network, with the launch of LabelFrancEducation.

3- Reinforcing the use of French in European and multilateral institutions

■ Continued linguistic diversity in multilateral and European forums and in international events is not a given. It is up to France to show the political determination to have the use of its language respected and to encourage diplomats and senior civil servants to learn it.

A POLICY SUPPORTING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

For France, which has enshrined regional languages in its Constitution, the promotion of French is part of a wider policy in support of linguistic pluralism. France's commitments in United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in the European institutions, and its international cooperation actions, are inspired by this policy, which supports, amongst others, the development of African languages.



↓ The European Parliament.

FRENCH IN EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

60,000 civil servants and diplomats from 24 European countries have learnt French with OIF support since 2002.

4- Developing the role of the French language in economic life

■ France and French-speaking countries play an active role in the world economy, accounting for close to 20% of the global trade in goods. The French language facilitates this trade, and should also gain from it. This is why France is encouraging the training in French of economic actors and the use of French among its partners.

5- Promoting French in the media and online

■ The media and the Internet are an unprecedented instrument for the outreach of French. France is seeking to take advantage of these tools, consolidating the position of the French-speaking media worldwide and increasing the offer of French content on the Web.



↓ France is increasing the offer of French teaching content online.

➤ FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/enjeux-internationaux/langue-francaise-francophonie-et/

AEFE (Agency for French education abroad)
www.aefe.fr

Institut français
www.institutfrancais.com

Alliance française foundation
www.fondation-alliancefr.org

Mission laïque française (MLF)
www.mlfmonde.org

International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF)
www.francophonie.org

General Delegation for the French Language and the Languages of France (DGLFLF)
www.dgllf.culture.gouv.fr

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