

FRA 2013

Field Manual

FRANCE



AN EXPLICITLY GOSPEL-CENTRED NETWORK

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Introduction

Location: bordering the Bay of Biscay and English Channel, between Belgium and Spain, southeast of the UK; bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Italy and Spain.

Boasting an impressive, and some would say unmatched, historical and cultural heritage France (officially the French Republic) sits among the most important nations in the contemporary Western world. Unceasingly attractive to outsiders France annually sees 70 million visitors pass through its borders a year, 10 million more than its own population¹.

Described as having a ‘feast of monuments’, including the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe and the Notre Dame de Paris, France also boasts a beautiful natural landscape with the Pyrennées in the south and the French Alps in the east. French cuisine remains the golden standard and significant cultural hot spots, such as the vast Louvre and the Musée Picasso, lie within its land.

Importantly France has long provided a geographic, economic, and linguistic bridge joining northern and southern Europe. It is Europe’s most important agricultural producer and one of the world’s leading industrial powers.

Despite its apparent riches France is still facing considerable challenges in the wake of the recession and internal conflicts regarding immigration. Above all, however, France has a pressing and deeply ingrained need, the need for churches that faithfully preach the gospel of King Jesus.

Population

	Population	Ann Growth	Density
2010	62,636,580	0.53%	115/sq km
2020	64,930,944	0.32%	119/sq km
2030	66,473,807	-0.16%	122/sq km

Statistics taken from Operation World

Statistical Overview²

- Birth Rate: 12.7 births/1,000 population. Country comparison: 156 (2012)
- Death Rate: 8.9 deaths/1,000 population. Country comparison: 70 (2012)
- Net Migration Rate: 1.1 migrant(s)/1,000 population. Country comparison: 51 (2012)
- Urban population: 85% of total population (2010)
- Rate of urbanization: 1% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

¹ The Guardian, 2006, *France: Essential Guide*: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/2006/nov/03/france.essentialinfo>

² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>

People Groups

European 83.5%

French 69.5%: Regional identities have faded with increased movement of people within France and standardization of modern French.

Germanic 5.1%: Alsatian 2.6%; Fleming 1.3%; German 1.0%.

Other European 8.9%: Italian 1.7%; Basque 1.4%; Portuguese 1.4%; Slav(6) 1.4%; Spaniard 1.1%; Armenian 0.7%; Catalanian 0.5%.

North African/Middle Eastern 9.2%:

Berber (Kabyle, Shawiya, Riff, others) 5.6%; North African Arab 2.0%; Levant Arab 0.6%; many other Middle Eastern/West Asian peoples.

African/Caribbean 4.0%:

Representing every francophone nation, most West and Central African ethnic groups and French Caribbean ethnicities.

Asian 2.0%:

Vietnamese 0.9%; Chinese 0.4%; Lao/ Hmong 0.2%.

Others 1.3%:

Jews 0.8%; Romani 0.4%.³

Languages

French 99%, rapidly declining regional dialects and languages (Provençal, Breton, Alsatian, Corsican, Catalan, Basque, Flemish) ⁴

³ James Mandyck, 2010, Operation World, Biblica publishing, p. 340 - 345

⁴ James Mandyck, 2010, Operation World, Biblica publishing, p.340 - 345

Politics⁵

Political Process

Universal suffrage at the age of 21 has existed in France since 1848 for men and since 1944 for women; the age of eligibility was lowered to 18 in 1974. Legislation enacted in the late 1990s penalises political parties for failing to maintain sufficient parity between male and female candidates. Candidates for the National Assembly must receive a majority, not a plurality, of votes, and, if no candidate receives an absolute majority, then a second ballot is held the following week and the post is awarded to the plurality winner.

Elections follow the model of single-member districts rather than proportional representation within a district. Two-phase voting is also used for the presidency, with the exception that, if an absolute majority is not reached after the first ballot, then only the two highest vote getters are considered for the second ballot, which is contested two weeks later.

The French Parliament

The French parliament, a two chamber system, is composed of elected members of the National Assembly (lower house) and the Senate (upper house). The president is elected separately by direct universal suffrage and operates as head of state. The constitution gives the president the power to appoint the prime minister (often known as the premier), who oversees the execution of legislation. The president also appoints the Council of Ministers, or cabinet, which together with the prime minister is referred to as the government.

The power of the president is tied to the parliamentary strength of the parties that support him and that form a majority in the National Assembly. It is possible, however, for the president's parties to become a minority in the assembly, in which case the president must appoint a prime minister from the majority faction. Beginning in 1986, France experienced several periods of divided government, known as "cohabitation," in which the president and the prime minister belonged to different parties.

The National Assembly is composed of 577 deputies who are directly elected for a term of five years in single-member constituencies on the basis of a majority two-ballot system, which requires that a runoff take place if no candidate has obtained the absolute majority on the first ballot. The right to initiate legislation is shared by the government and the parliament. Bills are studied by parliamentary committees, although the government does control the agenda.

The Role of the President

The French system is characterised by the strong role of the president of the republic. The office of the president is unique in that it has the authority to bypass the parliament by submitting referenda directly to the people and even to dissolve the parliament altogether. The president presides over the Council of Ministers and other high councils, signs the more important decrees, appoints high civil servants and judges, negotiates and ratifies treaties, and is commander in chief of the armed forces. Under exceptional circumstances,

⁵ Section adapted from: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/215768/France/41158/The-role-of-the-president>

Article 16 allows for the concentration of all the powers of the state in the presidency. This article, enforced from April to September 1961 during the Algerian crisis, has received sharp criticism, having proved to be of limited practical value because of the stringent conditions attached to its operation.

The Role of the Prime Minister

Constitutionally, the office is responsible for the determination of governmental policy and exercises control over the civil service and the armed forces. Moreover, while all major decisions tended to be taken at the Élysée Palace (the residence of the president) under de Gaulle, responsibility for policy, at least in internal matters, has slowly passed to the head of the government. Especially since the mid-1970s, a working partnership between the president and the prime minister has tended to be established.

Economy and Occupations

The French economy is diversified across all sectors. The government has partially or fully privatized many large companies, including Air France, France Telecom, Renault, and Thales. However, the government maintains a strong presence in some sectors, particularly power, public transport, and defense industries.

With at least 79 million foreign tourists per year, France is the most visited country in the world and maintains the third largest income in the world from tourism.

France's leaders remain committed to a capitalism in which they maintain social equity by means of laws, tax policies, and social spending that reduce income disparity and the impact of free markets on public health and welfare.

France's real GDP contracted 2.6% in 2009, but recovered somewhat in 2010 and 2011, before stagnating in 2012. The unemployment rate increased from 7.4% in 2008 and has remained above 9% per year since then. Lower-than-expected growth and increased unemployment have strained France's public finances. The budget deficit rose sharply from 3.4% of GDP in 2008 to 7.5% of GDP in 2009 before improving to 4.5% of GDP in 2012, while France's public debt rose from 68% of GDP to 89% over the same period.

Under President Sarkozy, Paris implemented some austerity measures to bring the budget deficit under the 3% euro-zone ceiling by 2013 and to highlight France's commitment to fiscal discipline at a time of intense financial market scrutiny of euro-zone debt. Socialist Party candidate Francois Hollande won the May 2012 presidential election, after advocating pro-growth economic policies, the separation of banks' traditional deposit taking and lending activities from more speculative businesses, increasing the top corporate and personal tax rates, and hiring an additional 60,000 teachers during his five-year term.

France ratified the EU fiscal stability treaty in October 2012 and Hollande's government has maintained France's commitment to meeting the budget deficit target of 3% of GDP during 2013 even amid signs that economic growth will be lower than the government's

forecast of 0.8%. Despite stagnant growth and fiscal challenges, France's borrowing costs declined during the second half of 2012 to euro-era lows.⁶

Agriculture

France's extensive land area—of which more than half is arable or pastoral land and another quarter is wooded—presents broad opportunities for agriculture and forestry. Agriculture employs relatively few people—about 3 percent of the labour force—and makes only a small contribution to GDP—about 2 percent. Yet France is the EU's leading agricultural nation, accounting for more than one-fifth of the total value of output, and alone is responsible for more than one-third of the EU's production of oilseeds, cereals, and wine. France also is a major world exporter of agricultural commodities, and approximately one-eighth of the total value of the country's visible exports is related to agriculture and associated food and drink products.

Manufacturing

On the basis of employment and turnover, seven branches of manufacturing stand out as particularly important: vehicles, chemicals, metallurgy, mechanical engineering, electronics, food, and textiles. The vehicle industry is dominated by the activities of the two automobile manufacturers, Peugeot SA (including Citroën) and Renault, which together produce nearly four million cars annually. Automobile production generates a substantial number of direct jobs as well as employment in subsidiary industries, such as the major tire manufacturer Michelin. France also possesses an important industry for the manufacture of railway locomotives and rolling stock, for which the expanding high-speed train (train à grande vitesse; TGV) network represents a major market.

Food and beverage industries represent a large branch of French manufacturing, reflecting the considerable volume and diversity of agricultural production. Although present in most regions, food manufacturers are particularly concentrated in major urban market areas and in western agricultural regions such as Brittany, Pays de la Loire, and Basse-Normandie. The beverage sector is dominant in the main wine-growing areas of northern and northeastern France; it represents an important source of exports.

Finance

Although the French financial sector employed less than 13 percent of the labour force in the early 21st century, it accounted for roughly one-third of the country's total GDP. Home to some of Europe's largest banks and its second largest stock exchange, France is a key player in the continent's financial markets.

Military

Military service and Age obligation: 17-40 years of age for male or female voluntary military service; no conscription; 12-month service obligation; women serve in noncombat military posts (2012)

⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>

Manpower available: males age 16-49: 14,563,662, females age 16-49: 14,238,434 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures: 2.6% of GDP (2005 est.) Country comparison: 53⁷

Transport

According to latest statistics there are:

- 29,370km of Railways
- 951,500km of Roadways
- 475 (2008) airports

Ports and Terminals - Bordeaux, Calais, Dunkerque, Le Havre, Marseille, Nantes, Paris, Rouen, Strasbourg⁸

Society and Culture⁹

Relationships

French culture today is marked both by great regional and socioeconomic differences and by strong unifying tendencies.

The French are private people and have different rules of behaviour for people within their social circle and those who are not. Although the French are generally polite in all dealings, it is only with their close friends and family that they are free to be themselves. Friendship brings with it a set of roles and responsibilities, including being available should you be needed. Friendship involves frequent, if not daily, contact.

Culture

France has made significant contributions in all of the fine arts. In the nineteenth century, France was famous for its Impressionist painters, including Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919), Claude Monet (1840–1926), and Edouard Manet (1832–83). The most famous French sculptor was Auguste Rodin (1840–1917). Post-impressionists Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), Paul Gauguin (1848–1903), and Henri Matisse (1869–1954) had a great influence on twentieth-century painting.

France's great musicians include the nineteenth-century composers Hector Berlioz (1803–69), Claude Debussy (1862–1918), and Maurice Ravel (1875–1937). Pierre Boulez (1925–) is well-known worldwide as a composer and conductor. France is also an international center for ballet.

⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>

⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>

⁹ <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Costa-Rica-to-Georgia/French.html>

Nineteenth-century novelists Victor Hugo (1802–85), Honoré de Balzac (1799–1859), and Emile Zola (1840–1902) wrote about the social issues of their time. Marcel Proust (1871–1922) is considered France's greatest twentieth-century writer.

Food

Each region has its own cuisine and specialities, from the German-influenced sausages of Alsace to the Mediterranean seafood and olives of Provence. Baguettes, croissants and a coffee are a typical breakfast; lunch and dinner are more lengthy affairs. The cuisine is heavily reliant on meat - typically beef, pork, veal, lamb and rabbit - cooked in rich and complex sauces.

Far from being viewed as gourmet, foods like foie gras (goose liver), snails, kidney, tripe and tongue are as popular as meat stews, steaks, bouillabaisse (fish soup) and tarts. Crepes, custards, souffles, mousses and pastries are common desserts. France has a fantastic variety of cheese - a different one for every day of the year. Significant North African and Asian populations have brought their own spicy cuisines to the country. Vegetarians may find little joy outside the main centres, but good quality bread, cheese and fruit is always available from delicatessens and markets.¹⁰

Sports

The **Tour de France** is a very important sporting event in the French calendar . Known, by reputation, as the most prestigious and challenging bicycle race it attracts the world's best riders. Staged for three weeks each July—usually in some 20 daylong stages—the Tour typically comprises 20 professional teams of 9 riders each and covers some 2,235 miles, mainly in France, with occasional and brief visits to such countries as Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Spain.

France also fields an international football (soccer) team which has attained considerable success. In recent memory they won the World Cup (1998) and two years later were victorious at UEFA Euro 2000.

Festivals

- **New Year's Eve** is celebrated with a festive dinner. At midnight, family and friends wish each other a good year by kissing.
- For **Epiphany** on January 6, a large round pastry is baked with a bean hidden in it. The person who finds the bean becomes "ruler" for the evening.
- **Mardi Gras**, on Shrove Tuesday (the last day before Lent) in February, is marked by parades featuring flowers, floats, and giant cardboard figures.
- **Labour Day** on May 1st is celebrated by workers' parades.
- May 8th marks the end of World War II (1939–45).

¹⁰ The Guardian, 2006, *France: Essential Guide*: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/2006/nov/03/france.essentialinfo>

● **Bastille Day** (France's national holiday) is on July 14th, which commemorates the storming of the Bastille in 1789. It is accompanied by parades, fireworks, and dancing in the streets.

● **Christmas** remains an important celebration in France. Due to the prevailing secular mindset it is often solely celebrated with large meals and the giving and receiving of presents with very little reference to its Christian heritage (although some people do attend midnight Mass the night before).¹¹

The Religious Landscape

The religious history of France is regrettably stained with tragedy and violence. Bloody wars waged in the 16th century (the St Bartholomew's Massacre claimed a staggering toll of 200,000 Protestant lives) and the 17th century was marked by the brutal persecution of the Huguenots and the French Revolution (1789 - 1801). Starting with the Reformation and then Counter-Reformation, France moved through the Enlightenment to philosophically culminate in modern-day atheistic existentialism and a materialist view of life.

During the Reformation it was estimated that up to 25% embraced the new Protestant teaching. But persecution (from mid 16th century to late 18th century), humanism and nominalism (in the last 200 years) have reduced this to 1.9% in 2010. Hostility toward organized religion as well as the privatization of spirituality mean that regular attendance in any church is below 8%.

laïcité: a 'secular' nation

In 1905, amid renewed anti-clerical militancy, the French government decreed the separation of church and state, a principle known as 'laïcité' which still holds today. This undergirding secular mindset has several implications for the religious landscape:

- Strict official neutrality in religious affairs (from the government's perspective)
- No 'proselytising' in public buildings - especially schools (schools as religion-free zones goes to the heart of the French idea of citizenship)
- A recognition of individuals rather than groups: a French citizen owes allegiance to the nation, and has no officially sanctioned ethnic or religious identity.¹²

This had particular implications for the 6.5 million strong Muslim population. In 2004 the government banned Muslim head scarves and other religious symbols in state schools. Additional controversial legislation passed in 2010 prohibited face-concealing garments—i.e. veils that fully covered a woman's face—in public places.

As a result (at least as one of the factors) this has had an impact on biblical literacy. Asked whether they had read a phrase from the Bible in the past 12 months, only 21 percent of

¹¹ <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Costa-Rica-to-Georgia/French.html>

¹² Henri Astier, 2004, *The deep roots of French Secularism*: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3325285.stm>

French respondents said yes in a poll conducted by GFK-Eurisko.¹³ In Smith's study only 7.9% of participants under 28 were certain that God exists (the highest score was 25% in the 68+ bracket).¹⁴

Catholicism: facing challenges in Contemporary France

Catholicism historically has had a great deal of influence on French society and culture. Lindberg notes that in the 16th century "the power and prestige of French kings was strongly rooted in Roman Catholic ritual and ceremonies".¹⁵ At the same time the relationship between the (Catholic) church and state has often been a troubled one. Odon Vallet, a French religion and Vatican scholar, gave the stark reminder that it was "Napoleon [that] put a pope in prison".

Today, in contemporary France, Catholicism faces significant challenges. Whilst the numbers of those claiming to be Catholics is relatively high (51%) recent news reports suggest that only 1-in-20 of the French population regularly attend Mass. The number of baptisms has plunged by almost 25 percent since 2000, while the number of Catholic wedding services has dropped by 40 percent over that period.

Douglas Yates, a professor working in Paris, describes the situation in broad strokes:

"Demographically, the practicing Catholic population is gray haired, as anyone could see who walks into a French church. Many churches are so ill-attended that they are abandoned, or sold to the commune (often turned into private homes, restaurants or even cafes)".¹⁶

Practicing the Occult

Widespread involvement with occult practices is also a prominent feature of the religious landscape. There are more people earning a living from occult vocations than there are registered doctors, and 10 times more than evangelical pastors and missionaries (estimates suggest that there are over 30,000 registered Mediums and Spiritual healers).¹⁷ This is especially striking when one considers that only 150 men completed training for the (Catholic) priesthood.

About half of the French population believe in faith healing, with one quarter putting their faith in clairvoyants or astrology. An estimated 10 million people pay around \$40 billion for occult consultations, three times the amount paid to their family doctors.¹⁸

Non-religious: a growing segment of society

¹³ Philip Pullella, 2008, *U.S. among most Bible-literate nations: poll*: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/04/28/us-religion-bible-idUSL2875626420080428>

¹⁴ Tom.W.Smith, 2012, *Beliefs about God across Time and Countries*; NORC/University of Chicago: http://www.norc.org/PDFs/Beliefs_about_God_Report.pdf

¹⁵ Carter Lindberg, 2010, *The European Reformation*; Wiley-Blackwell

¹⁶ Reuters, 2013, *France's Vanishing Catholics*: <http://www.ibtimes.com/church-decline-frances-vanishing-catholics-1125241>

¹⁷ <http://www.ccf.org/evangelicalfrance/evangelicalfrance.html>

¹⁸ <http://www.ccf.org/evangelicalfrance/evangelicalfrance.html>

On the other side of the spectrum a significant proportion of the French population self-describe themselves as non-religious, with many identifying themselves as Atheists. Smith's report highlights that, of those polled, 23.3% responded that they didn't believe in God (the third highest percentage, just behind East Germany (52.1%) and the Czech Republic (39.9%)). In the same report 15.5% responded that 'I know God really exists and I have no doubts about it' and as few as 18.7% agreed that a 'Personal God' existed.¹⁹

Islam: the second religion of France

Now the second religion of France. Growth is largely through immigration and a higher birth rate. There are estimated 150,000 French converts to Islam, mostly via marriage.

Yearly conversions to Islam have doubled in the past 25 years where "public attitudes to Islam are awkward and sometimes hostile. Of an estimated six million muslims in France, about 100,000 are thought to be converts, compared to about 50,000 in 1986. Many converts are men younger than 40 and born in France's former African colonies or overseas territories.²⁰

There are deep divisions in French Islam. Over 70% of of Muslims are of Maghrebian origin, but many mosques are financed by hard-line groups from other countries.

A large percentage of Muslims live in poor urban contexts, forming an increasingly dissatisfied social group that is conflicted about its own identity. Rates of crime, unemployment and under-education are all higher in French muslim communities.

Reports suggest that up to 15,000 Muslims are converts to Christianity, one-third of those becoming Protestants.

Breakdown of Religions in France

Religions	Pop%	Population	Annual Growth
Christian	61.14	38, 296.005	-0.6%
Non-religious	26.03	16,304,302	2.4%
Muslim	10.5	6,576,841	2.8%
Buddhist	0.97	607, 575	1.8%
Jewish	0.94	588, 784	-0.9%
Other	0.4%	250, 546	0.5%
Baha'i	0.02	12. 527	0.5%

Information taken from Operation World

¹⁹ Tom.W.Smith, 2012, *Beliefs about God across Time and Countries*; NORC/University of Chicago: http://www.norc.org/PDFs/Beliefs_about_God_Report.pdf

²⁰ New York Times, 2013, *More in France Are Turning to Islam, Challenging a Nation's Idea of Itself*: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/04/world/europe/rise-of-islamic-converts-challenges-france.html?pagewanted=1&_r=0

Breakdown of Denominations in France

Christians	Denominations	Pop%	Affiliates	Annual Growth
Protestant	112	0.63	376,000	0.3%
Independent	21	0.44	262,000	4.0%
Anglican	1	0.02	10,000	-0.2%
Catholic	20	84.37	50,703,000	-0.1%
Orthodox	9	1.74	1,045,000	1.7%
Marginal	4	0.77	463,000	0.8%

Information taken from Operation World

Statistics²¹

- Percent identifying as a religious person - 50.7% (1999)
- Percent attending religious services at least once a month - 11% (1999)
- Percent active in a church or religious organisation - 4.4% (1999)
- Percent believing in God - 68% (1981)/61.5% (1999)
- Percent believing that religious leaders should not influence people's vote. - 86.2% (1999)
- Percent believing that things would be better if there are more people with strong religious beliefs - 13.2% (1999)
- Percent believing in the concept of sin. - 39.9% (1999)
- Percent that think that religious faith is an important quality in children - 8.7% (2005)
- Percent that often think about meaning and purpose of life - 44.3% (2005)
- Percent finding comfort and strength from religion - 34.7% (1999)
- Percent considering religion important - 40.9% (2005)
- Percent confident in religious organisations - 47.2% (2005)

The Gospel in France²²

The average size of a French church is about 35-50 people. Whilst this means that many churches are able to function with a “family” atmosphere, there is great difficulty in growing beyond this number, primarily because it requires a different mentality of church life and growth. It is in the larger cities (population over 100,000) that churches grow most quickly.

There are 36,551 cites/towns/villages in France. The vast majority of them (35,000) are without an Evangelical church. This number is best interpreted in light of the statistics above since France has many thousands of small villages that are still considered communes but whose inhabitants are accustomed to frequenting nearby towns to do routine activities (and who would not need a church in their own village but could go to a

²¹ http://www.thearda.com/internationalData/countries/Country_83_5.asp

²² Information taken from: James Mandyck, 2010, Operation World, Biblica publishing, p. 340 - 345

larger town's church). There are still 340 towns with at least 10,000 inhabitants that have no existing Evangelical church.

Within the larger picture French Evangelicals are such a minority that they are often viewed as being part of a cult. This label, inevitably, conveys negative connotations from the outset and has proved to be a significant barrier for outside engagement.

Evangelical Christians in France are usually very committed believers because they are living in a secular society. When they go to church, they know why they are going - it is not a routine. They also need fellowship as they often don't meet another Christian at work during the week.

Against all of these barriers the church in France has grown significantly over the last 20 years and the rate of growth is increasing, particularly among Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations. The Catholic church has a growing 'renewal' movement and many Roman Catholics are reading the Bible for the first time in their lives.²³

The CNEF claim in their 2012 report that a new local church is planted once every ten days. The equivalent of 35 additional new churches every week²⁴. The CNEF has a vision to plant one church for every 10,000 people, no short order as there are 4,200 fellowships remaining to meet this goal.

The Bible is essential to gospel growth in France, yet for most the Bible is an alien book. Less than 10% own the Bible and 80% have never handled one. Yet, Bible sales are at an all-time high, spurred by the spiritual hunger evident among many and availability of inexpensive (\$2) Bibles in supermarkets and secular bookstores.²⁵

Fast Growing Minority Churches

More than 250 ethnic churches (Africans, Antilleans, and Gypsies) exist just in the greater Paris area.

25% of all gypsies in France have been converted to Christianity over the last few decades. Estimates suggest that as many as 145,000 of the 425,000 strong Gypsy population claim the label 'Evangelical'.²⁶

Whilst there is much to be thankful for these minority churches face a number of challenges. They are often subject to a great deal of negative bias from local government and media. Alongside this leadership is also poses a problem, especially as these churches attract the poorest and most vulnerable of society. There are reports of pastors leading churches who have little training or accountability. Pray for godly men, who hold fast to the gospel of Christ, to be trained and raised up to positions of leadership.

²³ <http://www.ccf.org/evangelicalfrance/evangelicalfrance.html>

²⁴ <http://lecnef.org/cartes-et-chiffres>

²⁵ James Mandyck, 2010, Operation World, Biblica publishing, p. 340 - 345

²⁶ Robert Marquand, 2010, *In France, an Evangelical Gypsy group shakes up the immigration debate*: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2010/0903/In-France-an-Evangelical-Gypsy-group-shakes-up-the-immigration-debate>

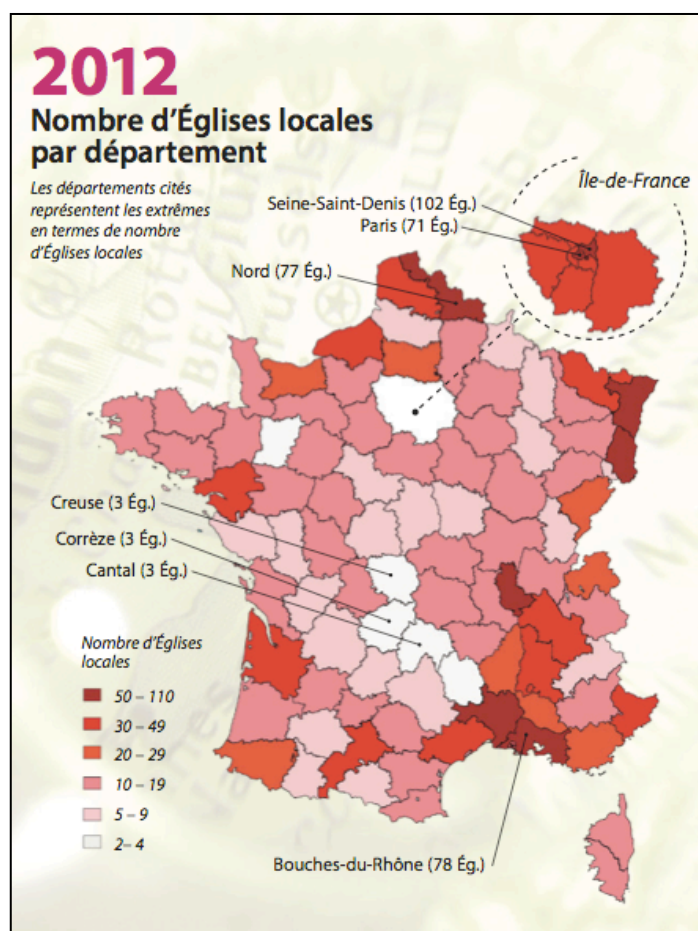
Church Planting Initiatives

In God's providence many Christians, both within and outside of France, have seen the deep gospel need and have responded by initiating and participating in church planting initiatives.²⁷

- **'Chelles Gospel'** - a church-planting initiative in Chelles, France: a town of 53,000 people and no gospel-preaching church
- **Sojourn Lyon** - three families from Sojourn Community Church who are seeking to plant a church in Lyon (http://www.sojournlyon.com/#!about_us/csgz)
- Phillip Moore (Pastor of Eglise du Val d'Europe and Acts 29 Europe Board Member) is helping co-ordinate church planting efforts within AEEBLF and ABRIF (listed in organisations/denominations) to see church planters equipped, supported and sent.

Church Planting Priority Areas

In 2012 the CNEF compiled a report of the number of churches per department. Their conclusions can be seen in the image below.²⁸



²⁷ This is a small selection of current initiatives and in no way is meant to be an exhaustive list.

²⁸ <http://lecnef.org/cartes-et-chiffres>

An interactive map can be found at: <http://www.1pour10000.fr/la-carte>

Unreached People Groups²⁹

- There are nearly 50 million French people who have no real link with a Christian church.
- More than 300 towns and cities of over 10,000 people have no evangelical presence.
- The Loire Valley and Brittany, Picardy and Centre regions are particularly lacking in evangelical congregations.
- The Basques in the southwest are virtually without an evangelical witness in their language.
- The Island of Corsica - population of 290,000 has only 300 evangelical believers.

The French Jewish Community

Ranks third in the world in size. There are between 580,000 and 700,000 French Jews in Paris alone and a further 100,000 in Marseille. 77% never attend a synagogue service. There are about 600 Messianic Jews in France - 95% of these are integrated into evangelical churches. Other 5% are affiliated with three known Messianic assemblies.

North Africans

Comprised almost entirely of Muslims, few having ever heard the gospel. Often placed in large, low cost housing areas in large cities. Unemployment, discrimination and hopeless frustration is rife among youth. Antagonism exists between them and French majority.

The Berbers

Form a large minority among the North Africans and possibly make up the majority of Algerians, Kabyle believers are increasing in number, although not on the scale of their brethren in Algeria. The Joshua Project states that there are 696,000 Kabyle in France of whom 4% are Christian. 0.50% are evangelical.³⁰

Black Africans

Have come in large numbers from Francophone Africa as students, refugees and work-seekers. There exists a great imbalance in Christian presence and mercy among them with vibrant churches full of Central Africans while the West African Bambara, Wolof, Malinke, Soninke and others languish with few Christians and little outreach.

Indo-Chinese

²⁹ Information adapted from Operation World unless stated otherwise (James Mandyck, 2010, Operation World, Biblica publishing, p. 340-345)

³⁰ <http://www.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php?peo3=12399&rog3=FR>

Large number of Indo-Chinese refugees 1970s and '80s from France's former colonies retain a mostly insular existence. There are over 82 Asian evangelical churches, including 33 Chinese, 17 Korean, 11 Hmong and 9 Vietnamese. There is a definite shortfall of pastors and full-time workers for these people who remain unreached.

Challenges for Prayer

The fast-growing minority churches are tending to attract the poorest and most vulnerable of society. Pastors leading these churches tend to have little training or accountability. Physical and human resources are key elements in seeing churches planted in France. Against a background of suspicion and distrust having a building gives the Church credibility. Pioneer churches often have to face two challenges simultaneously: hiring a pastor and finding a building.³¹

Christian Organisations/ Denominations

- **The CNEF (Conseil National des Évangéliques de France):** a new attempt to give evangelicals in France a unified voice to the government and to the media, composed of the Evangelical Alliance, evangelicals from the Fédération Protestante de France, Assemblies of God, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement, and the Fédération Évangélique de France. <http://www.cnef.info>
- The CNEF also has a work group called “Establishment of new churches” involving several specialists in church-planting from various church networks and training institutions.
- **Evangelical Alliance** (Alliance Évangélique)
- **France-Mission:** An Anglo-French church-planting denomination that has planted over 50 churches since its establishment in 1957. Plants churches almost exclusively with nationals in leadership. www.france-mission.org
- **GBU (Groupes Bibliques Universitaires):** French equivalent of UCCF. Active in most major university towns.
- **GLO (Global Literature Outreach):** based in Scotland, but involved in sending short-term teams every year to cities in France. Have been involved in planting a number of churches in France over the past 20 years with nationals. <http://www.glo-europe.org/>
- **CAEF (Open Brethren):** A forward-thinking network keen on church-planting. www.caef.net
- **L'Association Baptiste En Region Il De France (ABRIF) & L'Association évangélique d'Églises baptistes de langue française (AEEBLF)** - two

³¹ James Mandycyk, 2010, Operation World, Biblica publishing, p.340-345

Baptist associations who have been instrumental in planting churches in the past and, as mentioned above, are actively seeking to send out and train church planters.

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