

France

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The country

France is situated in Western Europe bordered on the north by Belgium and Luxembourg, on the south-west by Germany, on the east by Switzerland and Italy, and on the south by Monaco, the Mediterranean Sea, Spain and Andorra. On the west France is bordered by the Bay of Biscay and the English Channel. The republic of France includes ten overseas possessions and has numerous territorial collectivities and dependencies.

The total area of France, which includes the island of Corsica located in the Mediterranean Sea, is 543,965 km². The capital and largest city is Paris. France has 60 million inhabitants, of which nearly 94 per cent are French by birth. Almost 75 per cent of the people are classified as urban dwellers. The country's official language is French, although regional languages such as Basque and Catalan are also spoken in some areas. Approximately 81 per cent of French residents are baptised Roman Catholics. Significant religious minority groups in France are Muslims, Protestants, and Jews.

Once largely agricultural, France has become increasingly industrialised since the Second World War. Whereas the industrial revolution began in the middle of the nineteenth century, France is still a large agricultural country (where the richer farmers benefit most from European Common Agriculture Policy funds) and where cultivated fields, orchards, and vineyards occupy 35 per cent of the land.

The government played a major part in the economy in the decades after the war, but since the mid-1980s it has reduced its involvement. Cultivated fields, orchards, and vineyards occupy 35 per cent of French land, and France is the top producer of wine in the world. Some 5 per cent of the labour force work in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Nearly 30 per cent of the work force is employed in industry, including manufacturing, mining, and construction. The rest are occupied in the service sector.

The head of the state is the president, who is elected by direct popular vote for a term of five years. The president designates the prime minister, who has to be approved by the parliament and appoints cabinet ministers. The French parliament comprises the National Assembly, which consists of 577 deputies, and the Senate which has 321 members. The National Assembly is elected by direct universal suffrage to serve up to five years, whereas the Senators are elected for a six-year term by indirect popular suffrage. Supreme legislative authority is vested in the National Assembly; in case of conflict an arrangement has to be found by a conciliation committee.

France's 22 regions are divided into 96 metropolitan departments. The departments are further divided into communes, which are governed by municipal councils. Each council elects a mayor from its membership. France has more than 36,500 communes. The communes, which greatly differ in area and population, are often identical with municipalities.

Alcohol production and trade

At the beginning of the 1950s the annual wine production in France was about 60 million hectolitres. Since then the yearly amount of wine produced has fluctuated around 65 million hectolitres, the figure being as high as 84 million hectolitres in 1983 and as low as 33 million hectolitres in 1957, depending on weather conditions. In the 1990s the annual wine production was about 55 million hectolitres. Wine exports rose from about 3 million hectolitres a year in the mid-1950s to about 7 million hectolitres in the mid-1970s and further to about 12 million hectolitres in the mid-1980s. In the mid-1990s about 11 million hectolitres of wine have been exported annually. In the mid-1970s the yearly amount of wine imported was about 7 million hectolitres. In 1995 the corresponding figure was 6 million hectolitres (International Statistics, 1977; Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997; World Drink Trends, 2002).

Red wine is produced more than white. In 1993, red wine accounted for 64 per cent of the total wine production. White wine accounts for 36 per cent of the wine production. However, approximately one third of this is distilled into cognac (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In the 1980s some 2 million hectolitres of distilled spirits were produced each year. About 1 million hectolitres of distilled spirits were exported annually. At the same time the annual imports of distilled spirits were about 0.4 million hectolitres (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

At the beginning of the 1960s the yearly beer production reached 18 million hectolitres. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s the annual beer production has been almost stable at about 20 million hectolitres (International statistics, 1977; Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). In 1995 packaged beer accounted for 76 per cent of total beer production. The increase of the proportion of draught beer of total beer production from 17 per cent in 1975 to 24 per cent in 1987 is an indication of increases in on-premise beer consumption since the mid-1970s. Domestic beers are clearly more popular than imported products. However, in the mid-1970s some 2 million hectolitres of beer were imported annually. In the mid-1990s the corresponding figure was about 3.5 million litres. Exports of beer have also increased during the same period from about 0.6 million hectolitres to 1.4 million hectolitres. Consequently, in the mid-1990s some 7 per cent of the French beer production were exported and imported beer accounted for 15 per cent of the French beer consumption, which is one of the highest rates in Europe.

The domestic brewing industry in France has rationalised quite significantly since the 1980s. In 1994, 25 brewing companies were operating, while the number in 1971 had been almost three times greater. The decline in numbers has occurred particularly among the smaller companies. Brewing companies with a capacity of over 500,000

hectolitres of beer only represent 20 per cent of all breweries in France. These breweries, however, accounted for as much as 91 per cent of the beer produced in 1990. Group Danone dominates the beer market, followed by Heineken. The top three producers cover almost 70 per cent of the beer market in France (Global Status Report on Alcohol, 1999).

Alcohol consumption

Per capita consumption of alcohol increased slowly in France after the Second World War, after which there has been a significant downward trend since 1960. At the beginning of the 1950s total alcohol consumption was about 19 litres of pure alcohol per capita a year. In 2000 the corresponding figure was 10.5 litres (Table 7.1; World Drink Trends, 2002). Thus, during the last fifty years the per capita alcohol consumption has decreased by about 40 per cent.

Table 7.1. Consumption of alcoholic beverages by beverage categories in France in litres of pure alcohol per capita and as percentages of total recorded alcohol consumption in the years 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995, five years' averages

	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995
Total alcohol consumption	19.81	18.58	16.96	13.89	11.73
Consumption of distilled spirits	2.43	2.47	2.38	2.33	2.49
Consumption of wines	16.25	14.34	12.40	9.56	7.43
Consumption of beer	1.13	1.77	2.18	2.00	1.81
Percentage of distilled spirits	12	13	14	17	21
Percentage of wines	82	77	73	69	63
Percentage of beer	6	10	13	14	16

Sources: Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997; World Drink Trends, 2002.

The consumption of wine peaked in 1957 at 139 litres per capita. Since then the consumption of wine has decreased constantly and in the late 1990s it was about 56 litres per capita a year. The decrease in wine consumption was thus 60 per cent or about 83 litres per capita in about four decades (World Drink Trends, 2002).

In accordance with regulatory laws, wines in France are grouped into two categories. These are table wines and quality wines. Production at the vineyards is controlled, thereby assuring the maintenance of quality wine. Wines meeting these requirements will be labelled Appellation Contrôlée, which is a guarantee of the wine's origin and quality. A second level of wine quality is indicated by the letters V.D.Q.S., an abbreviation from Vins Délimités de Qualité Supérieure. A third level is called "Vins de pays". Wines without these quality labels are classified as table wines. The popularity of table wines has been declining during the study period, although they still account for about 55 per cent of the total wine consumption. However, in the mid-1970s the corresponding figure was 84 per cent (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

The consumption of distilled spirits fell from a high of 2.9 litres of pure alcohol per capita in 1951 to a low of 1.9 litres in 1958. In 1965 the consumption had risen to 2.5

litres, and has since then fluctuated around 2.4 litres, which is the figure for the consumption of distilled spirits in 2000 (World Drink Trends, 2002). There may still have been a decreasing trend in the consumption of distilled spirits as it has been estimated that the unrecorded consumption of distilled spirits has been quite large in earlier decades (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997, 151).

The most popular distilled spirits in France are anise with about 40 per cent of the market both in 1975 and in 1990. The market share of whisky, gin and vodka has increased during the same period from 9 to 30 per cent. Brandy and aperitifs have been the losing types, the former from 13 to 7 per cent and the latter from 9 to 3 per cent. The share of liquors has decreased from 18 to 12 per cent while rum and creme de cassis have kept their share at about 10 per cent both in 1975 and in 1990 (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

At the beginning of the 1950s the annual consumption of beer was about 20 litres per capita. In 1976 the per capita consumption of beer peaked at 49 litres. Since then the consumption of beer has been on the decline. In the late 1990s the per capita consumption of beer was 39 litres a year (World Drink Trends, 2002). During the 1980s there was a shift from beer with an alcohol content between 2.0 and 3.9 per cent by volume both to stronger and lighter beer.

In 1981, low alcohol content beer accounted for 3 per cent of the total beer consumption. In 1994 the corresponding figure was over 7 per cent. During the same period the market share of special beer with an alcohol content over 5.4 per cent by volume increased from 17 per cent to 21 per cent. Two thirds of all beer consumed fall in the range of 4.4 to 5.4 per cent by volume (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In terms of pure alcohol, wine accounted for over 80 per cent of the total alcohol consumption in the mid-1950s. In the late 1990s the corresponding figure was 63 per cent. The proportion of distilled spirits has increased during the same period from 12 per cent to 21 per cent and that of beer from 6 per cent to 16 per cent. These increases of the relative market shares are mostly explained by the decreases in wine consumption, not in the absolute increases in the consumption of beer and distilled spirits.

Consumption of alcoholic beverages, and especially of wine, is a traditional feature of French life. It is estimated that 30 per cent of all wine is consumed with meals. Beer's rate is thought to be much lower, about 6.5 per cent of the total beer consumption. A significant part of alcoholic beverages is consumed on the premises in bars, cafés and restaurants. It is estimated that about 35 per cent of beer, 38 per cent of distilled spirits and 36 per cent of wine are consumed on on-licence premises. The number of cafés, once the centre of social life in France, has however decreased significantly from 200,000 establishments in 1960 to 50,000 in 1995 (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). The decrease can be linked to the decline in alcohol consumption and the rural-to-urban drift of the population (Sulkunen, 1989; Karlsson & Simpura, 2001).

During the 1980s, the number of men and women who drank alcohol at least once a day declined. Despite this, there was little change in the proportion of heavy drinkers. A study in 1995 suggests that while the number of regular drinkers has continued to

decline, the proportion of occasional drinkers has grown throughout the 1980s and 1990s. According to a semi-official source, alcohol consumption patterns have changed during the last twenty years as habitual consumption has been progressively replaced by excessive consumption with intoxication among adults (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). There are, however, no nation-wide drinking surveys from earlier decades that could verify this trend (Simpura & Karlsson, 2001).

There are also considerable variations in drinking patterns between different regions. The annual consumption of wine per capita in 1979, for example, varied from 41 litres in the north to 79 litres in the south-west. The consumption of beer varied from 7 litres in the south-west to 62 litres in the north, and the consumption of aperitifs, whisky and liqueurs from 2 litres in the Mediterranean area to 8 litres in the north (Moser, 1992).

The per capita consumption of all beverages in France was 423 litres in 1986 and 560 litres in 2000. The per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages was 123 litres in 1986 and 101 litres in 2000. From 1986 to 2000 the consumption of commercial non-alcoholic beverages increased from 300 litres to 459 litres. During this period the consumption of waters increased from 73 to 133 litres, the consumption of juices from 5 to 69 litres, the consumption of soft drinks from 27 to 39 litres, the consumption of milk from 63 to 75 litres, the consumption of coffee from 109 to 116 litres and the consumption of tea from 23 to 27 litres per capita (World Drink Trends, 2002).

Administrative structure of preventive alcohol policies

Several national bodies have been active in promoting preventive alcohol policy and programme development during the period after the Second World War. The first national body was established as early as in 1954, when the High Committee for Study and Information on Alcoholism (Haut Comité d'Etudes et d'Information sur l'Alcoolisme) was established. The committee was an agency of the Prime Minister's office and continued as such for about 30 years, after which it lost its high protection and was attached to the Ministry of Health. From that time on, its area of responsibility has substantially narrowed down.

In December 1991 the High Committee for Study and Information on Alcoholism was transformed into the High Committee for Public Health (Haut Comité de la Santé Publique). The new committee, which reports to the Minister of Health, turned its attention to more urgent tasks, with special concerns for illicit drugs and AIDS.

Association Nationale de Prévention en Alcoologie et Addictologie (ANPAA) - National Association for Prevention in Alcohol and Drugs - is the new name of Association Nationale de Prévention de l'Alcoolisme (ANPA) - the National Committee for Prevention of Alcoholism, established in the late nineteenth century. It is the oldest and most important non-governmental organisation dedicated to the battle against alcoholism. It is a voluntary organisation with a membership of over 5,000. The National Committee for Prevention of Alcoholism acts as a public pressure and information group and is largely decentralised. It has a national headquarter that sets guidelines for general policies and prepares documentation and films no more films, and also acts as a training centre (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). The French

Society of Alcoholology, founded in 1978, develops contacts between members and organisations of various disciplines in the study of alcohol matters (Moser, 1992).

On January 10, 1991, a public health legislation (Loi Évin) was passed. The aim of Loi Évin was to fight against alcohol misuse. The law was especially directed at the most vulnerable segments of the population, the young and the disadvantaged.???? Amongst other, the law placed harsh restrictions on alcohol advertising.

Currently there is no single specialised public administrative body in charge of preventive alcohol policies in France. Preventive alcohol policies are, however, to a great extent dependent on the Health Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The ministry's three main operative agencies are

- administrative services which are in charge of funding, both for treatment and prevention, gathered in Bureau SP3 in charge of alcohol, drugs and mental health structures,
- the Institut National de Prévention et d'Éducation pour la Santé, new name of the Comité Français d'Éducation à la Santé (French Committee for Health Education) which is a specialised agency of the Ministry of Social Affairs dealing with general prevention and education campaigns.
- the High Committee for Public Health which is an expert group overseeing public health problems. See supra

The most recent action taken in the field of preventive alcohol policies was in 1998, when the Mission Interministérielle de Lutte contre la Drogue et la Toxicomanie – MILDT – (Interdepartmental mission for the fight against drugs and drug addiction), an agency of the prime minister, was asked to add alcohol, tobacco and psychotropic pharmaceutical drugs to its field of action. The interdepartmental mission for the fight against drugs and drug addiction published a plan for the fight against drugs and on the prevention of addiction in June 1999 (Plan triennal de lutte contre la drogue et de prévention des dépendances). It is, however, too early to see the results of this programme (ECAS APQ, 1999). This new organisation is fragile since a political change in 2002, with a new majority placing hopes more on repression than on education, and willing to act more on illegal drugs than on alcohol.

The Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Maladie, structure of the social insurance system funds prevention programs through a special fund called FNPEIS. The cooperation between so many agencies is not easy.

Licensing policy

In France, alcohol producers need a licence to operate. The licence is granted to them by the Ministry of Treasury. There are a few regulations in the licence system concerning the maximum and minimum alcohol strength of the beverages produced. Wines, for instance, must have an alcohol content between 8.5 per cent and 15 per cent by volume and distilled spirits must not be over 45 per cent alcohol by volume with the exception of a special product of the Caribbeans called rhum agricole, which can go up to 50 or 55 per cent alcohol by volume. There are also regulations on the minimum and maximum content of sugar in some liquors (ECAS APQ, 1999). Alcohol importers and wholesalers also need a licence to operate. This licence is also granted by the Ministry of Treasury.

France has also two categories of private production privileges, the *bouilleurs de cru* and the *bouilleurs ambulants*. The *bouilleurs de cru* are small distillers allowed to produce up to 10 litres of pure alcohol tax free per year. Since 1960 this privilege has been non-transferable, and their number has been decreasing. In 1986 about 800,000 *bouilleurs de cru* reported production and they accounted about 4 per cent of the total production of distilled spirits. It is, however, estimated that only half of the real production is reported (Hurts, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). The other privilege, the *bouilleurs ambulants*, has also lost its importance because of rigid rules from 1959, including paying excise duties on the spirits distilled by these travelling distilleries.

The licence legislation with regard to retail sales of alcoholic beverages was introduced during the period 1954 to 1959 and has not changed since then. Licensing policies are based on a classification of beverages into five groups (ECAS APQ, 1999). The four categories of licences which may be issued for on-premise retail sales are related to the beverage groups in the following way:

- First category licence or non-alcoholic beverage licence is for sale of the beverages in group one consisting of non-alcoholic beverages and beverages with an alcohol content under 1.2 per cent alcohol by volume.
- Second category licence or fermented beverage licence is for sale of alcoholic beverages in groups one and two, group two consisting of fermented beverages, wine, beer, cider and perry, as well as natural sweet wines under the fiscal system of wines, blackcurrant liqueur, and fermented fruit or vegetable juice containing between 1.2 and 3.0 per cent alcohol by volume.
- Third category licence or restricted beverage licence is for sale of alcoholic beverages in groups one, two and three, group three consisting of natural sweet wines other than those from group two, liqueur wines, wine-based cocktail drinks, and strawberry, raspberry, blackcurrant or cherry liqueurs whose alcohol content is under 18 per cent by volume.
- Fourth category licence or full beverage licence is for sale of alcoholic beverages in all five groups. Group four consists of rum and beverages distilled from wine, cider, perry of fruits, and group five consists of all other distilled beverages.

An establishment licensed to sell alcoholic beverages for on-premise consumption may also sell the same beverages for off-premise consumption. Other licences for off-premise retailers of alcoholic beverages are:

- Petite Licence à Emporter allowing to sell beverages in groups one and two, and
- Grande Licence à Emporter allowing to sell all kinds of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (ECAS APQ, 1999).

The licences for off- and on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages are granted by the Ministry of Treasure. Regarding the on-premise licence, the authorities take into account the location of the premise for which the application is made. The licensing law contains a specific provision that prevents premises from being established in an inappropriate location, for instance near schools, hospitals, burial grounds and public transport agencies. A maximum density of outlets with regard to licences in category two and three is based on the rule one on-premise retailer per 450 inhabitants. However, in many cases the density is higher because the retailers had already operated there before the legislation came into force. In large urban areas, the limit is one licence per

3,000 inhabitants. In large urban areas there has also been problems regarding the maximum density especially in new towns or popular leisure resorts. New licences for the fourth category have been issued only on a temporary basis for the duration of special events (ECAS APQ, 1999).

The on-premise licence is permanent but can be cancelled if the establishment is closed for a period of over three years. No new on-premise licences are granted. Therefore a new establishment must purchase the licence from a place that is ceasing its activity. As no new licences are granted, the price of an on-premise licence on the market is currently very high (ECAS APQ, 1999).

Restaurants not holding any of the above-mentioned licences for on-premise consumption may get either

- Petit Licence Restaurant allowing to sell beverages in groups one and two for consumption on the premises, but only with food, or
- Licence Restaurant allowing to sell all beverages for consumption, but only with food.

As a result of the licensing regulations introduced in the late 1950s, the number of establishments for licence categories two, three and four has decreased considerably. Their number declined from 1960 to 1992 from over 250,000 licences to about 168 000 licences, whereas establishments carrying category one licences increased from 7,000 to 42,000. Also the total number of other off-premise licences has decreased. The number of licences allowing the selling of all alcoholic beverages decreased from 99,000 to 63,000 during the period 1960-1992 whereas licences allowing to sell non-alcoholic fermented alcoholic beverages increased from 49,000 to 60,000. The number of those on-premise licences allowing serving of alcoholic beverages with food has increased between years 1960 and 1992 from 19,000 to 41,000, but the total number of all licences was in 1992 about 20 per cent lower than in 1960 (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

Restrictions of availability

The Code des Débits de Boissons forbids all minors under the age of 16 to enter a bar unless accompanied by an adult. All alcohol purchases on both off- and on-licence premises are prohibited of persons under 16 years of age. The legal age limits are fairly well-enforced with regard to on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages. The same does not, however, apply to off-premise sale of alcoholic beverages. The legislation concerning legal age limits was introduced gradually from 1954 to 1959 and it has not changed since (ECAS APQ, 1999).

Local authorities determine restrictions on permitted hours. The restrictions are, however, not alcohol specific but related to business hours in general. Sale of alcoholic beverages is allowed while the establishments are open which depends on the nature of the establishment. Since Loi Évin was passed in 1991 alcohol sales from vending machines are not allowed. Likewise the off-premise sale of alcoholic beverages at service stations is not permitted between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. (ECAS APQ, 1999).

The sale of alcoholic beverages is also prohibited along highways, except with meals, and near hospitals, schools, industrial areas and old people's retirement homes.

Authorisation of sales in and around sports grounds has varied in the last decades. The last legislation authorised the sales except for ten days a year. This law was, however, condemned by the Conseil d'Etat, which controls the conformity of new laws (ECAS APQ, 1999).

Alcohol taxation

In France there are three types of indirect taxes on alcoholic beverages which are brought together under the term excise duty. These are circulation taxes (droit de circulation) for wines and fermented beverages except for beer, consumption tax on distilled spirits and intermediate products and excise duty on beer (ECAS APQ, 1999). On beer, the excise duty is levied on the basis of hectolitre per degree of alcohol in the finished product in two alcohol content categories (Table 7.2). Excise duties on wine and intermediate products are levied on the basis of hectolitre of the product with different rates on still wine and sparkling wine and other sparkling fermented products. The excise duty on distilled spirits is levied on the basis of hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product.

Table 7.2. Excise duty rates for alcoholic beverages in France in 2000 in French francs and in euro

Alcoholic beverage category*	FF	EUR
Beer, exceeding 0.5% alcohol by volume, per hectolitre per degree of alcohol in the finished product		
From 0.5 to 2.8% alcohol by volume	8.50	1.30
Over 2.8% alcohol by volume	17.00	2.59
Wine, and fermented beverages other than wine and beer, per hectolitre of the product		
Still wine and other still fermented beverages	22.00	3.35
Sparkling wine	54.80	8.84
Other sparkling fermented beverages	22.00	3.35
Intermediate products, per hectolitre of the product		
Standard rate	1,400.00	213.43
Reduced rate for natural sweet wines (vin doux naturel)	350.00	53.36
Distilled beverages, per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product		
Standard rate	9,510.00	1,449.79
Reduced rate for rum from the overseas departments	5474.00	834.51

* For details of the lower limits of alcoholic beverages and other EU rules concerning alcohol taxation, see Chapter 2.

Source: European Commission, DG XXI, Excise duty tables, November 2000.

At the beginning of the 1970s the excise duty on beer was based on the volume of the product in two different alcohol content categories (Table 7.3) In 1972 there were different rates for hectolitre beer with an alcohol content between at least 1.0 and at most 4.6 per cent by volume and over 4.6 per cent by volume. Before 1993 the excise duty rate on the stronger beer increased in 1977 and 1982. The increases were

respectively 50 per cent and 100 per cent. In 1982 the excise duty for beer decreased by 19 per cent. The excise duty rate for the stronger beer was about twice that of the weaker one.

Table 7.3. Excise duty rates for beer in France from 1972 to 1992 in French francs per hectolitre of the product and from 1993 to 2000 in French francs per hectolitre per degree of alcohol in the finished product

Year	Alcohol content in per cent by volume			
		At least 1.0 but at most 4.6%*	More than 2.8%	More than 4.6%
1972		4.50		8.00
1977		4.50		12.00
1980		6.80		12.00
1981		13.60		24.00
1982		11.00		19.50
1993	6.25		12.50	
1997	8.25		17.00	

* From 1991 to 1993 at least 1.2 but at most 4.6

Source: Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997.

The change in tax base in 1993 meant that the excise duty on a beer of 5 per cent alcohol by volume was increased threefold. In 1997 there was a further increase in beer excise duty rate with 36 per cent (Table 7.3).

Even at the beginning of the 1970s excise duty on wine was set per hectolitre of the product (Table 7.4). In 1972 the excise duty rate was 9 francs. In 1980 it was raised to 13.5 francs and in 1981 to 27 francs. In 1982 the excise duty rate for wine was decreased to 22 francs per hectolitre of the product which is also the current rate.

Table 7.4. Excise duty rates for still wine, sparkling wine and intermediate products in France from 1972 to 2000 in French francs per hectolitre of the product for still wine and sparkling wine and per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product for intermediate products

Year	Still wine	Sparkling wine	Intermediate products
1972	9.00	22.50	2,690.00
1975	9.00	22.50	3,575.00
1976	9.00	22.59	4,005.00
1977	9.00	22.50	4,135.00
1980	13.50	33.80	5,975.00
1981	27.00	67.60	6,400.00
1982	22.00	54.80	6,795.00
1987	22.00	54.80	6,930.00
1993	22.00	54.80	1,400.00*

* per hectolitre of the product

Source: Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997.

The excise duty rate for sparkling wine has since 1972 been 2.5 times the rate for still wine (Table 7.4). Changes in the excise duty rate for sparkling wine follows the same path as the rate for still wine.

At the beginning of the 1970s the special tax on intermediate products was set on the basis of hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product. In 1972 the excise duty rate was 2,690 francs. It has been raised in the years 1975, 1976, 1980, 1981, 1982 and in 1987 when it reached the rate of 6.930 francs per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product. In the 1972-1992 period the increase in the excise duty rate has been only a little higher than that of beer or wine.

The current excise duty base and rate for intermediate products was put in effect in 1993. For a fortified wine with 15-per-cent alcohol by volume the increase in the excise duty rate was about 20 per cent and for a fortified wine with an alcohol content of 21 per cent by volume the decrease in excise duty rate was 4 per cent.

As early as in 1972 the tax base for distilled spirits was hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product but there were three different excise duty rates for distilled spirits (Table 7.5). The rate for cereal-based spirits, like whisky, was 3,450 francs, for wine and fruit-based spirits, like cognac, it was 2,690 and for rums 1,860 francs. In 1975, 1976, 1977, 1980 and 1981 these rates were raised so that the relation between different excise duty rates was kept constant. In 1982 the excise duty rate for cereal-based spirits was lowered to 7,655 francs and the relative decrease was higher than for wine- and fruit-based spirits or rum. In 1987 the rate for cereal-based and wine- and fruit-based spirits was equalised, and the new rate was 7,810 francs per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product. The rate for rum was set to 4,496 francs. The current rates were reached in 1993 (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

Table 7.5. Excise duty rates for distilled spirits in France from 1972 to 2000 in French francs per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product in three product groups

Year	Rums	Wine- and fruit-based distilled spirits	Cereal-based distilled spirits
1972	1,860.00	2,690.00	3,450.00
1975	2,475.00	3,575.00	4,590.00
1976	2,820.00	4,005.00	5,235.00
1977	3,100.00	4,135.00	5,800.00
1980	3,720.00	5,975.00	7,655.00
1981	4,150.00	6,635.00	8,220.00
1982	4,405.00	7,015.00	7,655.00
1983	4,405.00	7,655.00	
1987	4,495.00	7,810.00	
1993	5,215.00	9,060.00	
1997	5,474.00	9,510.00	

Source: Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997.

In 1983 a special tax of 10 francs per litre, applied to beverages with an alcohol content of more than 25 per cent by volume, was introduced to fund social programmes. In 1985 it was lowered but became subject to the VAT. With the VAT included the effective level of the special tax was 10.13 francs per litre. Vintners may also pay fees to support agricultural associations. These fees are written in the fiscal laws and may be collected by the Ministry of Finance or by the organisations themselves (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). Since April 1, 1983, a contribution via a tax sticker of 1 franc per decilitre or fraction of a decilitre is demanded of beverages with an alcohol content of over 25 per cent by volume. This contribution is directly paid to the Department of Social Security (ECAS APQ, 1999).

In 1995, the value added tax (VAT) was increased to the current rate of 20.6 per cent from 18.6 per cent, which had been the rate since 1982. Prior to 1982, it had been set at 17.6 per cent (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In the late 1990s the excise duty on wine counted per litre of pure alcohol was one tenth that of beer and the excise duty on distilled spirits was 7 times that of beer. After taking the VAT into account, special taxes on wine were about 40 per cent that of beer and special taxes on distilled spirits were about three times the special taxes on beer. About 19 per cent of wine prices constituted of taxes. The corresponding amounts for beer and distilled spirits were 24 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively.

Changes in excise duty levels in tables 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5 are given in nominal values. During the 1950-2000 period the value of the French currency has decreased because of inflation. The increase in the general price level in France in the 1960-2000 period as described by the consumer price index (CPI) is given in table 7.6.

Table 7.6. Consumer price index in France, 1960-2000, 1995 is 100

Year	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
CPI	13.1	15.7	19.3	29.5	48.6	72.6	89.6	100.0	106.3

Source: OECD, Main Economic Indicators, March 2000 CD-ROM.

When compared with the CPI, it is clear that the real value of excise duties on all alcoholic beverages has decreased by about 50 per cent in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1990s the excise duty on wine has continued to decrease in real terms whereas the excise duty on distilled spirits has stayed about the same in real terms. For beer the excise duty has increased four times over in the 1990s. This happened especially in the year 1993. According to the data collected in the ECAS project, the real price index for all alcoholic beverages in France has been quite stable in the 1963-1974 period. Since the mid-1970s the real price index has decreased but only by a few percentage points (Leppänen, 1999).

Alcohol advertising

With the Loi Évin (1991), France introduced the most restrictive measures on alcohol advertising in the EU at the time. Effective immediately in January 1991, the law banned direct and indirect alcohol advertising with some exceptions. All alcoholic beverages containing more than 1.2 per cent alcohol by volume were covered by the law. The Loi Évin was voted through partly because the former restrictions on alcohol advertising from July 1987 had discriminated against foreign products. This legal aspect led the Scotch whisky producers to take the French government to the European Court of Justice, and France was condemned and forced to amend the previous law. During the interim period, producers and advertisers ignored the French law and the trespassing had been flagrant and outrageous. This led the parliament to vote for the Loi Évin (ECAS APQ, 1999).

The 1991 law can be summarised by the following points:

- All drinks over 1.2 per cent alcohol by volume are considered alcoholic beverages.
- No advertising should be targeted on young people.
- No advertising is allowed on TV and in cinemas.
- No sponsorship of cultural or sporting events is authorised.
- Advertising is permitted in magazines for grown-ups, on billboards in places of production and selling, on radio channels, at certain hours, in special events or places such as wine fairs and wine museums.
- Within the media the messages are controlled. It is not allowed to show people drinking in the advertisements, the messages should only refer to the characteristics of the products such as alcohol content, origin, brand name, composition, name and

address of the manufacturer and retailers, information of production, instructions on ways to prepare and drink the product.

- A health message, saying that “l’abus d’alcool est dangereux pour la santé (“alcohol abuse is dangerous to health), must be included in each advertisement.

It should be stressed that the above measures are required by the law. It is not a question of self-regulation or voluntary code of practice depending on the goodwill of the producers. Illegal advertisements can be brought before the court, and there are high penalties for infringement.

Although TV advertising of alcoholic beverages is banned, indirect advertising, as seen at sports events, may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. In practice, the presence of alcoholic beverages on television can be tolerated only if there are no insistent shots of glasses or alcohol bottles, insistent manipulations of any object directly related to alcohol or direct allusions to alcoholic products.

Radio advertising is banned daily between 5 p.m. and midnight and all day Wednesday. Advertising of alcoholic beverages is also banned in cinemas. The following sentences are wrong : “The contents of alcohol advertising are also restricted in the press, but the regulations do not apply to foreign magazines sold in France.”

Since 1991 the law has been amended somewhat. Legislation governing outdoor advertising was amended in 1994 to reinstate freedom for poster advertisements in all territories. A health warning is, however, required in all advertisements, except in advertisements directed at the trade. The warning should state that the abuse of alcohol is dangerous to health and that alcohol should be consumed in moderation (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

The law has been threatened by an active wine producers lobby during the year 2004. Thanks to the struggle of public health experts, only a small softening has been voted in January by the French parliament and the law remains one of the most severe in Europe. This change introduced the possibility of talking about the objective characteristics of the products (such as colour, smell, taste).

Since 1991 there has been a change in alcohol advertising in the French media. The Loi Évin has had an impact on the language of advertising and it has lost its seductive character. The advertisements infringing the law have been condemned by the French courts of justice. The law has also been very easy to apply and it has caused no difficulty in courts, in contrary to the previous legislation (ECAS APQ, 1999).

Moreover, the European Court of Justice ruled in 2004 (C-262/02) that the law is compatible with the European treaties and proportional to its objective.

Education and information

The Association Nationale de Prévention en Alcoologie et Addictologie bases its programmes on a comprehensive approach to prevention of all alcohol-related problems in the health and social fields. This approach implies a reduction of the average consumption in the whole population. In its activities ANPAA aims

- to raise public awareness of all problems related with acute and chronic intoxication,
- to improve services for people drinking too much in an addictive way or in socially accepted patterns, and
- to promote preventive action at the local and national levels by the training of go-between agents.

The National Association for the Prevention of Alcoholism employs about 1200 workers within its 100 local committees, located all through France and overseas territories. They work as physicians, social workers and training agents in specialised teams for rehabilitation and treatment, prevention and education. The National Association for the Prevention of Alcoholism also operates a library and information service, and publishes the journal *Addictions*.

Drunk driving

Since 1959, drunk driving and driving while under the influence of alcohol have been offences. In 1970 the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit of 0.08 to 0.12 per cent was established as a minor offence and over 0.12 per cent as a more serious misdemeanour. In 1978 the legislation was strengthened, and tests for intoxication could be taken whether or not the driver was involved in an accident. At the same time, penalties became harsher so that offenders would face, in addition to a fine and imprisonment, a licence suspension of one to three years, after which a new licence would be issued only after a medical examination.

In 1983 the BAC level for a misdemeanour offence was lowered to 0.08 per cent and the charge of a minor offence was eliminated. Penalties for impaired driving also became more severe, and refusal to submit a breath test became subject to the same penalties.

In 1994, penalties for driving while intoxicated were increased. Previously, driving in a state of intoxication brought penalties of up to two years in prison and a fine of 30,000 francs. The new regulations introduced the crime of risks caused to others by a deliberate breach of a particular safety or prudence obligation, the penalties for which are a year's imprisonment and a fine of 100,000 francs.

In August 1995, the BAC limit was lowered to 0.05 per cent. Driving with a BAC of 0.05 to 0.08 per cent results in a fine amounting to 756 euro as well as in losing three points on an offender's driving licence. A licence is suspended after losing 12 points. If the offender has a BAC level of more than 0.08 per cent, the maximum sentence is a fine of 4,537 euro and a two-year jail sentence (ECAS APQ, 1999).

The following changes have occurred in the enforcement of drunk driving since the 1950s:

- Law of July 9, 1970, where the authorised BAC level is set at 0.08 per cent.
- Law of 12 July 1978 according to which random blood tests can be organised by the police forces after instructions by the juridical administration.
- Law of 8 December 1983 according to which a BAC over 0.08 per cent is considered a misdemeanour. The older limit of 0.12 per cent disappears.
- Law of 17 January 1986 authorising police forces to impound a driving licence for 72 hours. The licence can be withdrawn by the administrative authorities.

- Law of 10 July 1989 introducing new driving licence with points. Of a total of 6 points, 3 can be taken out in case of drunk driving.
- Law of 31 October 1990 according to which random breath tests can be decided by the police force without any instruction by the judicial administration
- Decree of 23 November 1992 which increases the number of points in the driving licence to 12. Half of them can still be withdrawn in case of drunk driving
- Decree of 11 July 1994 introducing a BAC over 0.07 per cent which is considered a misdemeanour
- Decree of 29 August 1995 which reinstates the double threshold, with a lower limit 0.05 per cent.

In the last years, the law became more severe. The main new points are :

- Loss of 6 points (out of 12) on the driving licence is statutory in case of BAC over 0,5
- Licence suspension is statutory when driver is responsible of homicide or in case of relapse
- New drivers receive a temporary licence, with only 6 points, for the 3 first years. In case of loss of this 6 points statutory in case of BAC over 0,5 the licence is cancelled.
- Professionnal drivers of public transports have an authorized BAC lowered to 0,2
- More severe sanctions are made in case of use of illicit drugs

The administrative structure of treatment for alcoholism

There is no specialised administrative structure for treatment. The treatment activities depend on the Health Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs. There is no central administrative structure, because treatment is proposed in various institutions, for instance, in non-specialised general hospital units, psychiatric hospitals, a few specialised "unités d'alcoologie" and in private clinics.

The specialised outpatient centres were established during the years 1970-1990. By now there are about 220 centres. The care is free of charge. Since 1999, the activities of specialised outpatient centres are included in the general system of social security. The budget of the social security system is now voted by the parliament. One half of the specialised outpatient centres are dependent on ANPAA. The other half are run by other private organisations, public hospitals, and municipalities. (ECAS APQ, 1999).

These specialized centres were created in the seventies under the name Centres d'hygiène alimentaire (nutritional hygiene centres). Their number has since increased, and their field of activity has expanded. Although originally planned mainly for case-finding and follow-up of excessive drinkers, they have become preventive and caring institutions, welcoming all people with alcohol problems of whatever degree (Moser, 1992). They are called today Centre de cure ambulatoire en alcoologie CCAA (Out-patient centres for alcohol problems)

Outpatient and inpatient units of psychiatric hospitals are often poorly adapted to the treatment of alcohol-dependent patients. There are some inpatient homes. After-care is carried out in separate centres, sometimes with the help of associations of treated (recovering or recovered would be much better) alcoholics. There are 15 such associations in the country. Their objective is to supply mutual help and support and to provide a welcoming structure.

Summary

Consumption of wine has been and indeed still is a traditional feature of French everyday life. In the mid-1950s per capita alcohol consumption in France reached its highest level during the latter part of the twentieth century, reaching a level of over 20 litres per capita. Since then the total alcohol consumption, and especially wine consumption, has been on a rapid decrease, falling by over 40 per cent from its highest levels. Explanations of the decreasing consumption figures can be found, for instance, in changes in living conditions and in the rural-to-urban drift of the population.

The awareness of the dangers of alcohol has been higher in France than in the EU countries on the average, and also higher than in most of its neighbouring countries. The first national body in charge of preventive alcohol policies, the High Committee for Study and Information on Alcoholism, was established in 1954. However, as early as in the late nineteenth century, the oldest and most important non-governmental organisation dedicated to the battle against alcoholism, the National Committee for Prevention of Alcoholism, had been established. Since the Second World War, several national committees and working groups for prevention of alcohol-related harm have been created. The effect these committees have had on the fight against alcohol-related harm and alcoholism has, however, varied considerably.

During the past two decades, and especially during the 1990s, there have been several alcohol policy restrictions introduced in France. In 1991 a very strict alcohol legislation, Loi Évin, was passed in France. The law, which was especially directed at protecting the most vulnerable segments of the population, contained several harsh restrictions in the field of preventive alcohol policies. It included, for instance, very restrictive measures on advertising of alcoholic beverages. Also concerning drunk driving legislation, France has become stricter. The BAC limit was lowered to 0.05 per cent in 1995, and there were also some new restrictions on the off-premise sale of alcoholic beverages. Even if these measures have had an effect on the alcohol consumption among youngsters, in sport arenas and in relation to driving a car, the decrease in the total alcohol consumption cannot be explained by alcohol control measures.

When speaking of introducing alcohol control measures in France, one must remember that viticulture is still an important part of the French agricultural structure, and that France is one of the world's leading wine producers and exporters. This means that there is a clear opposition towards restrictive alcohol policy measures in France. One should also remember that although several restrictions on the availability of alcoholic beverages have been introduced during the past two decades, and although the consumption of alcoholic beverages has decreased considerably, alcohol consumption in France still remains on a high level in comparison with most other European

countries.

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