



OUTCAN Guide | Life in Paris, France

LOCATION

Country: France

Town: Paris (capital)

Base: Canadian Embassy

Other info to Consider:

- Family (non-dependants) can visit and stay 90 days **without visa**.

POPULATION

Size: Over 2 million

Ethnicity: 80% French Nationals, 20% others.

LANGUAGE(S)

Official language: French.

Prevalence of French or English speaking: The official language is French. Many locals and those working in the service industry (ie restaurants and shops) speak English.

COST OF LIVING

Currency & Exchange rate to consider: Euro. 1 EUR =1.47652 CAD (March 2024)

QUALITY OF LIFE

Climate and potential for severe weather, natural disasters:

- It has a temperate coastal climate characterized by cool, wet winters and warm summers, with variable climactic conditions. Most of the rain falls over the winter.

Laws and Culture:

- Speed limits are 130Km/Hr on motorways and 50km/hr in cities/town.
- Driving is faster than what we are used to and driving lanes (as well as vehicles) are smaller than what we are used to.
- Most of the roads you will encounter are of the highest quality, and the motorways – though often tolled – are a very efficient way of travelling between cities.
- Penalties for drinking and driving are severe. The legal blood alcohol limit is 0.05%.
- It is illegal to cover your face in public places in France, including in the international arrivals area at airports. Failure to comply can lead to a heavy fine. There are no exemptions for tourists or for religious reasons.

Safety and Security:

- While it is a safe city, look out for pickpockets as in any European city.
- Crime is increasing due to high rates of Youth unemployment. Use caution when riding the subway.
- There is a threat of terrorism in Europe. Terrorists have carried out attacks in several European cities. In France, separate attacks causing multiple deaths and injuries have taken place. The

attacks, whether opportunistic or premeditated, targeted public spaces, including entertainment venues, restaurants and tourist sites. Further attacks in Europe are likely.

Level of isolation:

- The language challenges can cause a high level of isolation, particularly among spouses.
- 8 Canadian family in this location.

HOUSING

- Housing on the economy.
- There is a high turnover due to military moves; therefore, there it's expected to be a reasonable selection.
- A safe and secure neighborhood must be your first concern when looking for a house or apartment in Paris.
- Apartments in Paris are very small.
- The housing market is very active and makes it very difficult to find the right place to live.
- Note that as only one month notice of move is required, the key time to visit homes is end May to early June.

EMPLOYMENT

Are there employment opportunities for spouses?

- Due to tax and legal implications, spousal employment in the economy is not an option.
- Employment is extremely limited. Families should plan to be a single-income family for the duration of the posting. **CFMWS | MFS | OUTCAN Europe | CFMWS**
- Language abilities in French would be a condition for employment.

Op Tempo: Varies depending on place of work and position.

HEALTH CARE

Access:

- France ranks among the World Health Organization's top 10 countries for quality health services.
- Not all clinics will have English speaking staff, most hospitals do.
- The Canadian Medical Clinic in Geilenkirchen is responsible for the healthcare of all Canadian military members in Europe and can be accessed.
- All bills associated with the care of dependents are the member's personal responsibility and are to be claimed through PSHCP. **PSHCP Member Portal (pshcp-msh.ca)**

Special needs:

- Depending on language required (English/French), area of specialization and degree of support needed,
- It is highly advised that the family consult with Medical Screening Officer in Canada and / or the Canadian Element to ensure that the required services are readily available in either English or French before accepting a posting.

Consideration for pregnancy / birth:

- Health care for pregnancy and birth is available on the economy.

Dental:

- Dental care can be accessed in town. You are required to pay up front, and you can then claim your expenses.

SCHOOLING

- For an approved list of schools, please contact Children's Education Management at:
CEMGEE@forces.gc.ca
- [Children's Education Management - Canada.ca](#)
- [Gestion de l'éducation des enfants - Canada.ca](#)

Curriculum vs. Canadian curriculum:

- The curriculum varies depending on the choice of school.
- Canadian history or geography is not offered at any school.

Resources for special need children:

- Access to special needs services depends on the choice of school, there may be language requirements, area of specialization and degree of support needed, so it may be very limited.
- Consult with CEM and the school before making any commitments.

CHILDCARE

- Largely available on the economy. English services are more limited.

TRANSPORTATION

Things to Consider:

- Airport: Charles-de-Gaule (CDG)
- Public transport is excellent.
- Parking spaces in Paris are mostly parallel parking spaces. Paris is putting new laws in place for larger vehicles (Vans/SUV's). It is recommended not to bring larger vehicles to Paris.
- Very good train system.

RESOURCES AND AMENITIES

Is there a Military Family Services centre available in that location?

- No physical centre. Families in France are supported by the Remote Team:
MFSE.Remotes@cfmws.com

Psychosocial / Mental Health Resources:

- Not at post, MFS(E) Social Workers, CAF SW/Mental Health Team for members are located in Geilenkirchen, Germany. Padre is located in Casteau, Belgium (SHAPE).

Communications:

- Cell phone and internet plans are very affordable and reliable in France. Examples of companies are Orange, SFR, Bouygues Telecom, and Free Mobile.

ACTIVITIES

Access to sports or other leisure activities:

- Wide variety. English might be limited.

Availability of playgrounds:

- Yes. Many parks in residential areas also have walking parks.

RESTRICTIONS TO CONSIDER

Are common-law relationships recognized? Yes

Are same-sex couples recognized? Yes

Medications that are illegal in the country:

- Cannabis is illegal in France.

Other Considerations:

- Pharmacy has most need medications. Sometimes language might be an issue.
- Difficult finding distilled water for CPAP machines.
- Animals entering France need to be microchipped and have a valid rabies vaccine.
- Some dog breeds are banned, such as Staffordshire Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier (Pit Bull Terrier), Japanese Tosa Inu, and Boerbull Mastiff, or will have restrictions imposed. It is the member's duty to verify.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- European Commission Country Reports (2023)
https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/2023-european-semester-country-reports_en
- Canadian Travel Advisories
<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>
- CIA World Factbooks (One Pagers from the US)
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/france>
- Living Abroad (from Gov.UK)
<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france>

For more comprehensive information, please feel free to reach out to the resources below

- MFS(E) Social Worker: MFSSocialWork@cfmws.com
- CAF Social Worker: GKMedicalClinic@forces.gc.ca
- MFS(E) Team: MFSE.Remotes@cfmws.com
- MFS(E) Regional Office: +49 (0) 2451 717 173, MFS.Europe@cfmws.com