

Paris, France - OVERVIEW

Updated: May 13, 2014

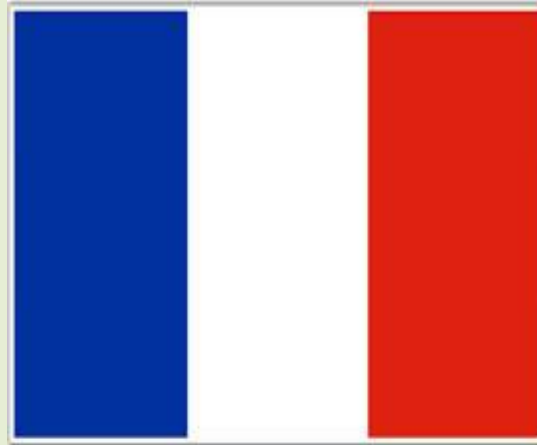


Country Name Long Form: French Republic






Government Type: Republic

Languages Spoken: French, English

National Flag



Paris is a Tier III location. Significant security measures are necessary.

	Overall Assessment	Political Violence	Crime	Terrorism	Travel Safety
Paris					
Key: (L) Low – (M) Medium – (H) High – (C)Critical					

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Political Violence is rated at LOW in Paris

Political Violence is relatively uncommon. Large demonstrations in Paris are generally controlled by a strong police presence, but such events have the potential to become violent and demonstrations should be avoided. In addition, the congestion caused by large demonstrations can cause serious transportation disruptions. Likewise, some sporting events, such as soccer matches, have occasionally degenerated into street violence.

TERRORISM

Terrorism is assessed as MEDIUM

The most significant threat stems from Islamist extremists, mostly Algerian, who carried out attacks in Paris in the 1990s. More recently, numerous terror plots have been foiled and many suspects arrested; nevertheless, attacks in the future cannot be ruled out. The Algerian-based al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb group has indicated on several occasions that it views France as a high priority for attack.

Paris, France - OVERVIEW

Although U.S. citizens have not been specifically targeted in terrorist attacks in the past few years, travelers should remain vigilant.

RULE OF LAW / CORRUPTION

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2013 gave Paris a score of 71, indicating that the country has low levels of corruption. The CPI rates countries by the perceived levels of corruption in the public sector, with the least corrupt countries receiving a maximum score of 100.

CRIME

Crime is assessed as MEDIUM

France is relatively safe and most crimes are non-violent. Crime in Paris is similar to that in most large cities. Pickpockets are by far the most significant problem. Thieves often time their pickpocket attempts to coincide with the closing of the automatic doors on the Metro, leaving the victim on the departing train. Violent crime is relatively uncommon in the city center.

The majority of crimes directed against foreign visitors, including U.S. citizens, involve pickpocketing, residential break-ins, bicycle theft, and other forms of theft with minimal violence.

KIDNAPPING

The risk of kidnapping in Paris is low. High profile expatriate executives should be aware of this threat.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

There has been an increase of sexual harassment and assault of women by taxi drivers in recent years.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Forest fires can occur suddenly due to man-made causes or lightening, and depending on weather conditions such fires can spread with little to no warning. Additionally, the avalanches and mudslides have occurred in the regions of Savoie and Haute-Savoie.

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Avoid public parks after dark, particularly Bois de Boulogne, because they are frequented by criminals.
- When in a crowded elevator and/or escalator at tourist sites and crowded metro cars and buses, take a seat or stand against a wall to deter pickpockets. Try to maintain a 360-degree awareness of the surrounding area.
- Be aware that thieves often operate in groups and will come to each other's aid if confronted.
- Stay in groups, travel in a caravan consisting of two or more vehicles, and stay on the main roads.
- Ensure that someone not traveling with you is aware of your itinerary.

Paris, France - OVERVIEW

- Avoid hotels that do not have adequate security.
- It is preferable to stay in the main tourist destinations.
- Pay close attention to your surroundings, especially when walking or driving in Paris.
- Official taxis are a suitable means of travel in daylight hours in urban areas. It is highly recommended that taxis be arranged through your hotel, or program office. Negotiate the price in advance.
- Women should be especially careful when traveling alone and avoid staying out late without a trusted male escort.
- Make sensible security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty crime, particularly pick pocketing and bag snatching.
- Carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling to avoid losing it in a robbery.
- Do not resist if you are being robbed and avoid eye contact and do not make any sudden movements. Victims have been killed when they resisted attack or refused to give up their money or other valuables.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and keep a low profile.
- Never leave your belongings unattended.
- Carry bags close to your body and make sure the fasteners are secure.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or wearing expensive jewelry or valuables.
- Leave all important documents in a safe or safe deposit box at your hotel and only carry certified copies.
- Trust your instincts. If someone or something makes you uneasy, avoid the situation.

Important Contact Details:

International Dialing Code: +33

Victims of crime in Paris should contact the following phone numbers for assistance:

POLICE: The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Paris is 17

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 18

AMBULANCE: 15

European Emergency: 112

Note: Police, ambulance or fire department response may be unreliable in some parts of the country.

TRAVEL & ROAD SAFETY

- The standard of infrastructure in Paris meets western standards including a reliable transportation network.

Paris, France - OVERVIEW

- The supply of basic amenities, such as power and water are reliable.

RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No rural travel after dark.
- No use of ATMs after dark.

HEALTH

Medical care is comparable to that found in the United States. Public and private healthcare are of a good standard nationwide on par with facilities present in other western nations. Medical staff may not have a good working knowledge of English particularly in smaller facilities.

- Tap water in Paris is generally safe to drink, but bottled water remains the best option for portable water.
- Unpasteurized milk should be boiled before consumption, or powdered or tinned milk should be used as an alternative.

The following vaccinations are recommended or required if travelling to Paris:

- Hepatitis A (recommended)
- Hepatitis B (recommended)
- Rabies (recommended)

It is also important to ensure that routine vaccinations are up to date for diseases including influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus.

Significant Diseases –

- Rabies – A viral infection that can affect animals and humans is present in bats in France; this poses a risk of transmission to humans.
- Measles – A contagious illness caused by a virus. The infection is spread by contact with droplets from the nose, mouth or throat. A resurgence of measles has been observed since 2008.

HOSPITALS – Paris

Broca Hospital

54-56, rue Pascal

Paris 75013

Tel: +33 1 44 08 3000

Website: <http://www.aphp.fr/>

Paris, France - OVERVIEW

Bretonneau Hospital Paris
23, rue Joseph-de Maistre
Paris 75018
Tel: +33 1 53 11 1800
Website: <http://www.aphp.fr/>

US EMBASSY – CONSULATE LOCATIONS

The US Embassy Paris

2 Avenue Gabriel
75008 Paris
Tel: +33 1 43 12 22 22
Fax: +33 1 42669783

USF INTERNATIONAL HOTLINE

USF 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 813-317-5815

AXA Assistance 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 1-877-577-9504 / +1-203-399-5130 (Call collect from abroad)

ASSIST ID #: GLMN 04983932. <http://www.culturalinsurance.com/resources/>

* Information derived from CIA World Fact Book, US Department of State, OSAC, and Travel Guard. This travel overview summarizes some of the most important concerns; however, it does not negate the need for detailed trip planning.