Export Opportunities in France

In 2017, France ranked 11th among U.S. export destinations and 15th among Virginia export destinations. Some of the top opportunities for U.S. exporters in France include:

- Aerospace
- Industrial Machinery
- Electrical Machinery
- Mineral Fuels and Oils
- Medical Instruments
- Art and Fashion
- Pharmaceuticals
- Automotive

Top Virginia Exports to France

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Export Category</th>
<th>2017 Value</th>
<th>Change 2017/2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Commodities</td>
<td>$223.7</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Machinery</td>
<td>$70.1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft &amp; Spacecraft</td>
<td>$24.8</td>
<td>277%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood</td>
<td>$22.0</td>
<td>3762%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Machinery</td>
<td>$19.7</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo/Video Equipment</td>
<td>$18.9</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Fuels &amp; Oils</td>
<td>$11.3</td>
<td>-24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Antiques</td>
<td>$10.4</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Instruments</td>
<td>$10.1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastics</td>
<td>$9.1</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wadding &amp; Nonwovens</td>
<td>$2.8</td>
<td>734%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(WORLD TRADE ATLAS) In US$ Millions

U.S. Exports to France

In US$ Billions

- 2015: $30.0
- 2016: $31.2
- 2017: $33.6

(WORLD TRADE ATLAS)
Opportunities in France for Exporters

**Aerospace**
France is the United States’ largest customer in this area. While French local civil aircraft production has maintained a value around US$50 billion over the last three years (2014-17), imports from the US rose from US$5.5 billion to US$7.7 billion. A vendor/product qualification process exists to work with many French companies such as Airbus, Safran, Dassault, and Thales. AS9110 and NADCAP are minimum requirements. The Paris Airshow is a top international event.

Top prospects include:
- New aircraft or engine models
- Very technical products such as composites

**Consumer Products**
Art is eclectic but so is French demand for US consumer products. France maintains a trade deficit with the US as interest in American culture, environmental consciousness, and changing lifestyles drives new trade. Toys are an important component of France’s dynamic specialized store sector while interest in art and highly developed Internet (5G anticipated for 2022) has spurred demand in photographic equipment.

Top prospects include:
- Art, Antiques
- Audiovisual equipment
- Toys and Games
- Food products, particularly “gourmet fast food”

**Medical Devices**
The US is not only well positioned in pharmaceutics and cosmetics, considering the dominance of local firms, American medical device companies in France bring in 22% of turnover in a €30.6 billion market. US exports to France in the sector were US$4.0 billion in 2018. More growth is expected, considering the ageing population and that existing competition is mostly niche providers.

- Rehabilitation
- Diagnosis systems, i.e. image networking
- Non-invasive surgery equipment
- Technical aids
- Intensive care equipment
- Disposable medical equipment

**Logistics**
In 2017, almost 37.5 million French people shopped online, which represents over 80% of internet users. High internet use, a recovering economy, a regulated shift away from diesel, and heavy tourism will boost logistics spending. The French plastics industry is worth US$32 billion, for which 39.9% of demand is for packaging. Powertrain equipment is 39.1% of France’s large automotive parts industry.

Top prospects include:
- E-Commerce
- Express delivery
- Vehicle parts
- Plastics/packaging

(US Commercial Service)
**FAST FACTS**

**Economic Overview**

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

Despite terrorist attacks, labor strikes, and recent bad weather, France is still the most visited country in the world with 83 million foreign tourists in 2016.

Low growth and high spending have strained France’s public finances, with public debt rising to 96% of GDP despite a slight deficit reduction between 2009-2016. Various social justice initiatives have had little success in curbing drastically high unemployment rates during the tenure of President Hollande. Since 2015 and continuing under President Macron’s administration, labor laws and budget proposals are seeking to lower labor costs for business, make employment more flexible, and reduce income taxes and small business taxes.

Widespread protests have been an impediment to substantial economic reform in France.

(CIA World Factbook)

**Cultural Guide**

- When meeting someone for the first time, or speaking to superiors, “Monsieur” or “Madame” should be used.
- The French will be interested in your advanced academic credentials and other qualifications, not in a personal relationship. Business cards are exchanged after initial greetings.
- There are high levels of formality involved with doing business in France. Appointments should be made at least two weeks in advance, in writing, by telephone, or by email. Secretaries are often responsible for handling appointments for senior individuals. If you expect to be delayed, telephone immediately.
- Meetings are conducted in a slow and highly structured manner to allow for questions and rational debating. Usually, decisions are made by more senior staff after the meeting and not as the result of high pressure sales tactics.

**Decision making takes a more intellectual approach rather than a pragmatic approach.**

- Make sure your printed material is available in both French and English.
- Business dress is stylish and understated. Men should wear dark-colored, formal suits, while women can wear business suits or formal dresses in soft colors. Accessories should be of high quality.

(Kwintessential)
Virginia Economic Development Partnership - International Trade offers a number of export-related services to Virginia businesses, including trade missions and market research by our Global Network of in-country consultants. These services are available to all Virginia exporters.

For more information, please visit our website: ExportVirginia.org

**Additional Resources**

- **France Overview**
  Global Edge - Michigan State University

- **French Taxation**
  InterNations

- **French News in English**
  The Local

- **Kwintessential France**
  Kwintessential Guide to France

- **France Country Commercial Guide**
  U.S. Commercial Service

- **Ease of Doing Business Report**
  World Bank

- **Doing Business in France**
  United Kingdom Trade & Investment