

## Background

Although it once had a strong Protestant witness in the sixteenth century, France is now known for its philosophical rejection of Biblical revelation and, as a result, is a thoroughly secularised and materialistic country.

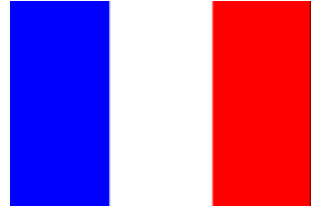
The Roman Catholic Church, always the principal target for the anti-clericalism that characterises French thinking, declined steeply at the end of the twentieth century, and mainline Protestantism has fared little better. But this is not to say that religion in France is dying. Islam is making an impact – it is estimated that there are as many as 4 million Muslims, largely made up those of North African descent – and the cults and sects are flourishing.

The occult is big business, with large numbers of mediums, witches and spiritists, as well as every variety of cult, on the scene. This "supermarket" approach to religion (take a little of what you like) regards faith

as just another product that you can buy into if you want to.

Spiritual work in France is, hardly surprisingly, very slow and there has been no real breakthrough, although evangelical witness has been growing slowly since the sixties. The spiritual ground is hard and unyielding and will only respond to patient evangelism and prayer.

France is the possibly the key to reaching Western Europe. French thinking has played a vital role in world history: whether it is John Calvin in the Reformation in the 16th century, René Descartes who sparked the Enlightenment in the 17th century, or the writers of the late 20th century who are defining postmodern thinking today. If we can reach France with the Gospel and see that same genius in action again, we will reach the world.



## ECM in France

ECM has had a team in Central France for over forty years. Workers are based with established churches, as well as in church planting situations, working in partnership with France Mission in several locations, or Baptist Federation churches.

Our current principal focus is around the Loire Valley, from Tours in the West to Cosne-sur-Loire several hours upstream. This area is

recognised as one of those parts of France which is particularly lacking in evangelical congregations.

## Ministry Opportunities

### Our principal objectives:

1. Appointing non-missionary leadership in the Tours church
2. Outreach in the town of Gien in view of a new church plant
3. Bringing a team together to start a new church plant in Gien
4. Identifying new local ministry opportunities
5. Raising prayer support for central France

### We are looking for:

- Christians who are willing to move to Gien to help with in this pioneering church plant



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## Prayer

- Evangelical Christianity has grown over the past 40 years to about 488,000, nearly a five-fold increase since 1960.
- But there are still nearly 50 million French people with no real link with a Christian church. 35,000 out of the 38,000 communes have no resident evangelical witness.
- The evangelical message is regarded by most French people as an alien ideology, rather than a home-grown faith and is often viewed as an extreme cult.
- France Mission has promoted the goal of one church for every 10,000 people by 2010, which will need a doubling of the number of congregations in the country.

## Database



### Nation

Area: 543,965 sq.km  
Population: 62.8 million  
Language: French



### Capital

**Paris**  
Population: 10.7 million



### Religious stats

(Source: CIA website)  
Catholic 85%  
Islam 8%  
Protestant 2%  
Jewish 1%



### Bible Schools

see European Evangelical Accrediting Association  
[www.eaaa.org](http://www.eaaa.org)



### National Organisation

Evangelical Alliance  
[aef.lauzet@free.fr](mailto:aef.lauzet@free.fr)  
Fédération des Missions Evangéliques Francophones  
[david.boydell@protestants.org](mailto:david.boydell@protestants.org)



### Websites

<http://francegate.com>  
[www.france.com](http://www.france.com)  
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