

Unit 17 The changing economic geography of France

About the unit

In this unit pupils learn about patterns of economic activity in France and their impact. Although the unit is based on France, the key questions and most of the activities could be adapted for any similar more economically developed country (MEDC). Pupils could also work in groups and study different MEDCs and compare their findings.

More able pupils could be given more freedom to organise their investigation, for example they could be asked to select a country, and a region within that country, that would be most suitable for the location of a factory of a transnational corporation (TNC).

This unit is expected to take 12–20 hours.

Key aspects

Geographical enquiry and skills

Pupils will:

- ask geographical questions
- suggest investigation sequences
- collect/record/present evidence
- analyse evidence and draw conclusions
- use atlases/globes/maps
- use secondary evidence
- draw maps, plans and graphs
- communicate using ICT

Knowledge and understanding of places

Pupils will:

- locate places and environments
- describe scale contexts
- describe and explain physical and human features
- investigate changes in places
- explore interdependence and global citizenship

Knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes

Explored through:

- economic activity

Knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development

Pupils will study:

- environmental change and management

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils will: describe and explain ways in which economic processes create geographical patterns in France and lead to changes within France's regions; identify economic links which make France and its former colonies dependent on each other; suggest relevant geographical questions and issues and appropriate sequences of investigation into France's changing economic geography; select and use effectively a range of skills and secondary sources of evidence and present their findings in a coherent way and reach conclusions that are consistent with the evidence

some pupils will not have made so much progress and will: describe and begin to suggest ways in which economic processes create geographical patterns in France and can lead to similarities and differences within France's regions; recognise some of the links that make France and its former colonies dependent on each other; begin to suggest relevant geographical questions for investigating France's changing economic geography; begin to select and use appropriate skills and secondary sources of evidence; begin to suggest plausible conclusions to their investigations and present their findings both graphically and in writing

some pupils will have progressed further and will: describe interactions within and between physical and human processes and begin to explain how these interactions create economic patterns within France and contribute to changes within France's regions; explain the many different economic links which make France and its former colonies dependent on each other; identify geographical questions and issues, and establish their own sequence of investigations into France's changing economic geography; select and use accurately a wide range of skills and evaluate critically sources of evidence; present well-argued summaries and begin to reach substantiated conclusions

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- classified industry into primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary categories
- considered economic indicators, *eg through the study of a less economically developed country (LEDC)*
- had opportunities to ask geographical questions and carry out a structured mini-enquiry
- constructed basic graphs and diagrams and interpreted statistical and cartographical information

Language for learning

Through the activities in this unit pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- trade and industry, *eg economic activity, occupational structure, primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary industry, heavy/light industry, high tech industry, raw materials, colony, TNC, trade, import, export, bilateral aid*
- changes, *eg rural depopulation, conflict, urban sprawl, energy mix, sustainable development*

Speaking and listening – through the activities pupils could:

- solve a problem, consider alternatives, structure plans and organise group activity

Reading – through the activities pupils could:

- identify what information is needed, then use different texts as sources

Writing – through the activities pupils could:

- organise content into whole piece with the relationships between points and paragraphs clearly signalled

Resources

Resources include:

- statistical information about the French economy is available from a number of sources, *eg geographical digests, atlases, textbooks, European resource centres (there is a national network of these – the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges (British Council) will be able to provide details)*
- internet sites of French TNCs
- information books, atlases, graph paper, outline maps of France, world maps, a comparison grid and writing frames
- supporting video programmes: *France 2000* series (BBC Schools). Programmes 1–5 cover urban issues, rural issues, agriculture, tourism and interdependence

Future learning

The study of an MEDC may be developed further through unit 20 ‘Comparing countries’. The study of a particular economic activity is the focus of unit 19 ‘Tourism – good or bad?’ Detailed knowledge of a country’s economic characteristics will be a useful foundation for further work in this area at GCSE level.

Links

The activities in this unit link with:

- other geography units – unit 19 ‘Tourism – good or bad?’, unit 20 ‘Comparing countries’
- mathematics – representing data using a range of graphs, interpreting data, drawing conclusions
- ICT – using a mapping package or geographic information system (GIS), using internet search engines, using word-processing and spreadsheet packages
- key skills – problem solving, improving own learning and performance
- citizenship – considering other people’s experiences, expressing and explaining views, global community

What is France's economy like? How is it changing? Why is it changing?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to select and use graphical techniques including ICT to present evidence • to interpret, analyse and draw conclusions from a range of statistics • to classify economic activity and use this to analyse a country's economic structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide pupils with statistics about France's economic structure. These should include trends in occupational structure (primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary) for the last 20–30 years; full- and part-time employment; male/female involvement in the workforce; unemployment; annual income; energy production and consumption. Ask the pupils to select, justify and use appropriate, and varied, graphs and diagrams to present this information, and write brief descriptions of what these show. Lower-attaining pupils may need to be directed to certain types of graph and/or be given graph outlines. • Prepare, in advance, a set of explanatory labels. Ask the pupils to match these to the appropriate graphs/diagrams and to the appropriate places on the graphs/diagrams. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transform data into suitable graphs, <i>eg comparative line graphs, pie charts, triangular graphs</i>, to represent France's economic structure • use graphs to describe the main characteristics of France's economic structure and explain how and why it has changed in recent years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For sources of statistical information see 'Resources'. • Mathematics: represent data using a range of graphs, interpret data and draw conclusions. • ICT: a mapping/GIS or spreadsheet package could be used to present some or all of the statistical data so that adequate attention can be given to interpretation. |
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How is economic activity in France affected by physical and human patterns and processes?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to interpret maps and secondary sources to identify patterns • to research and record information • to describe a country's physical and human features and how they affect economic activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils to work in groups to research a particular aspect, <i>eg physical regions, climatic zones, population distribution and movement, location of natural resources</i>, using a variety of resources, <i>eg textbooks, reference books, the internet, CD-ROMs</i>. Ask them to use the information to produce a series of annotated wall maps for class use, which illustrate how the environment influences economic activity and change. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe and locate key features of the natural and human environment • give valid examples of how the environment influences economic activity and change • identify, select and record relevant information effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language for learning: this activity provides an opportunity for pupils to identify what information is needed, then use different texts as sources. • Key skills: links with problem solving, where a problem is posed, <i>eg We need to cover all aspects. How can we do this in the time available?</i> |
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What is the pattern of economic activity in France? How is it changing? Why is it changing?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to interpret thematic maps • to draw, analyse and interpret choropleth maps • to describe patterns of economic activity in specific locations and identify relationships between variables • to consider how and why distribution of economic activity has changed and is changing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a summary, ask pupils to create a map of economic activity, drawing from thematic maps in an atlas or textbook, and then plan and complete a written description of the pattern of economic activity. Prepare a structured worksheet to help pupils identify correlations between this pattern and (using similar resources) population distribution/main urban centres, raw material and farming regions. • Draw choropleth maps to show economic change at the regional level. Divide the pupils into groups to present different sets of statistics, <i>eg growth in the service sector, growth in high tech industry, decline in heavy industry, decline in agricultural employment</i>. Give more able pupils an opportunity to produce their own key for the maps. • Ask pupils to compare these maps with the labelled graphs/diagrams from the first activity about France's economic structure. Discuss the links between structural changes, <i>eg the decline in old heavy industry/agricultural change and the pattern of economic activity</i>. Ask pupils to explore these in specific locations, <i>eg the decline in traditional industry (including farming) in the Auvergne, the growth of light industry in the Midi-Pyrenees</i>. Record these links, <i>eg as a 'heads and tails' exercise</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe in writing the distribution of economic activity in France and how and why this distribution is changing • identify relationships between the location of economic activities and, <i>eg the distribution of raw materials</i> • draw choropleth maps and interpret them to describe and explain the patterns shown | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language for learning: this activity provides pupils with an opportunity to produce writing in which points and paragraphs are suitably linked to make a coherent whole. • ICT: a mapping/GIS package with suitable data could be used to encourage a more analytical approach by predicting and searching for patterns of change. |
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Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note

How have changes in economic activity affected different regions?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to select and use appropriate graphical techniques to present evidence • to interpret, analyse and draw conclusions from a range of statistics • to identify main changes in economic activity in a region and the effects of such changes • to compare regional differences in a country and their causes, processes and consequences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select up to four contrasting regions of France, <i>eg Ile-de-France, Midi-Pyrenees, Nord/Pas de Calais and Languedoc-Roussillon</i>. Divide the class into groups (one group for each region) and ask them to present, using only maps, graphs and tables/lists, the region's economic structure and its pattern of economic activity (these concepts should now be familiar from the previous activities). Ask them to summarise their findings in a paragraph. • Ask pupils to list the main changes that have taken place in the selected region over the last 20–30 years and to present these in a series of annotated sketches of photographs, which show the industrial landscape (primary through to quaternary). Some pupils may benefit from being given photo outlines. As a summary activity, ask pupils to compare in a table the region they researched with one other region by sharing information with one of the other groups. A comparisons grid, with prompts, may help weaker writers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draw a range of graphs, <i>eg comparative line graphs, pie charts, triangular graphs</i>, to illustrate economic structure • use a map to describe economic activity in a selected region of France and explain the region's characteristics • sketch and label photographs showing the industrial landscape • compare two regions of France | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language for learning: this activity provides pupils with an opportunity to solve a problem, consider alternatives, structure plans and organise group activity. Pupils may need reminding about group processes. • Mathematics: represent data using a range of graphs, interpret data and draw conclusions. • ICT: a mapping/GIS or spreadsheet package could be used to present some or all of the statistical data so that adequate attention can be given to interpretation. |
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What are some of the issues arising from changes in economic activity?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ask geographical questions • to undertake geographical enquiry • to talk about their findings • to explore a regional issue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give pupils a choice of two or three issues for a mini-enquiry. Possible examples are rural depopulation, <i>eg the Auvergne</i>, environmental conflicts, <i>eg the Camargue</i>, France and the EU, urban sprawl in the Ile-de-France, France's energy mix – the nuclear power debate. Ask them to suggest the questions they should try to answer and to indicate the source of their information. Check their suggestions; some will have a good list of enquiry questions, others will require support. • Give pupils class and homework time to complete their investigation. As a summary activity, organise the pupils into groups (each having researched a different topic) and ask them to tell each other what they found out. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select appropriate questions to carry out a geographical enquiry into an issue • share findings verbally about an issue, including the different points of views held about it • explain some of the main points about the issue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship: this activity provides pupils with the opportunity to use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express and explain views that are not their own. |
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Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**How is France's economy linked to the wider world?**

- to select and use appropriate graphical techniques to present evidence
- to identify links and relationships
- to describe the national, international and global context of a country
- how and why France may be judged to be more developed
- to identify how a country is interdependent with others
- Ask pupils to suggest how they might determine France's state of economic development and then to provide evidence for their conclusions.
- Provide each pupil with an A3 map of the world and the necessary information so that they can illustrate how the French economy is linked to the wider world, *eg shade in the countries of the EU; shade in and label France's former colonies, its current overseas territories and departments; show, as flow lines if appropriate, imports from and exports to other countries; mark on and label the countries in which two or three of France's main TNCs operate*. Pupils could share the tasks to save time.
- Ask the pupils to identify and write down two or three links which make France dependent on other countries, *eg trade to and from EU countries, raw materials from/laid to former colonies, TNCs operating in its main trading partners' countries/ former colonies*. Help pupils to explore these links in relation to the geographical distribution of one specified economic activity and to write about their findings in a paragraph. Weaker writers may need more structured support.

- represent and identify France's main economic links as an MEDC with the rest of the world, using appropriate techniques
- identify and note France's interdependency with other countries
- describe the internal distribution and external links of a named economic activity

- Citizenship: this activity provides pupils with an opportunity to appreciate the world as a global community, and the political, economic, environmental and social implications of this.
- ICT: this activity provides opportunity for pupils to use the internet as a source of information about TNCs.
- ICT: using a word processor and writing frame provides support for writers.

What will economic activity be like in France in the future?

- to review/evaluate the work completed as part of this unit
- to apply current knowledge and understanding to make reasoned predictions
- to understand some of the main changes in economic activity
- to predict how a region may develop in the future with and without a sustainable development perspective
- Ask pupils to devise criteria to review the activities undertaken in this unit. Ask them which activities they found easiest and which hardest to undertake. *How have their ideas about France developed?* Ask pupils to share these ideas.
- Discuss with the class trends in the French economy over the last 10 years and how these trends might develop over the course of the next 20 years. Identify recent key developments such as the single European currency debate. Record the results of this discussion on a board/overhead transparency.
- Ask pupils to write and/or illustrate a short account of what they think the region they investigated (in 'How have changes in economic activity affected different regions?') will be like in 20 years' time, highlighting how and why they think it will have changed. Ask them to consider also how they think the changes should best be managed from the viewpoint of sustainable development. Weaker writers may need more structured support.

- use selected criteria to reflect on their achievements, including their strengths and weaknesses in enquiry work
- make a reasonable prediction of what one of France's regions will be like in 20 years' time, with reference to some issues of sustainable development

- The unit's work could be organised as a 'past, present and future' display.
- Key skills: links with improving own learning and performance. This activity provides pupils with opportunity to reflect on their own progress.
- Key skills: links with improving own learning and performance, where the geographical enquiry is the target. Pupils use the plan-do-review cycle, confirm their understanding of targets and how these will be met, follow plans using support and review achievements and progress.