

France's World-Leading Corporations

With 39 of the [500 biggest companies of the world](#) in 2010, France ranks 4th in the [Fortune Global 500](#), behind the USA, Japan and China, but ahead of [Germany](#) and the [UK](#). [Paris](#) is the second most important localization for the world's 500 biggest companies' headquarters (only to Tokyo). There are more Fortune Global 500's headquarters in Paris than in New York, London, Shanghai, Beijing or Frankfurt.[13]

French companies are ranking as leading firms in each and every major strategical economic sectors[14]:

[AXA](#) is the world's largest insurance company; [Air France](#) is the world's largest airline company in incomes; [L'Oreal](#) is the world's biggest cosmetic company; [LVMH](#) and [PPR](#) are the world's 1st and 2nd largest luxury companies; [GDF-Suez](#) is the world's largest energy company; [EDF](#) is the world's largest utility company; [Areva](#) is the world's nuclear-energy leader; [Veolia Environnement](#) is the world's largest environmental services and water management company; [VINCI](#), [Bouygues](#) and [Eiffage](#) are respectively world's 1st, 2nd and 4th building and public work companies; [Michelin](#) is the world's pneumatic leader; [Lafarge](#) is the world's largest cement company; [JCDecaux](#) is the world's largest outdoor advertising corporation; [BNP Paribas](#), [Credit Agricole](#) and [Societe Generale](#) are respectively the world's 1st, 6th and 8th biggest banks in assets in 2010;[15] [Carrefour](#) is the world's second largest retail group in terms of revenue; [EADS](#) is the world's second largest aerospace company; [Total](#) is the world's fourth largest private oil company; [Danone](#) is the world's fifth largest food company and the world's largest mineral water provider; [Sanofi Aventis](#) is the world's fifth largest pharmaceutical company; [Publicis](#) is the world's third largest advertising company; [PSA](#) is the world's 6th and Europe's 2nd largest automaker; [Renault-Nissan](#) is the world's leading electric car developer among major automakers; [Accor](#) is the leading European hotel group; [Alstom](#) is one of the world's leading conglomerate in [power generation](#) and [transports](#); [Pernod Ricard](#) is one of the world's biggest producer of [distilled beverages](#) (owning the former [Seagram distilleries](#))...

In 2008, France was the second-largest recipient of foreign direct investment among OECD countries at \$117.9 billion, above the United Kingdom (\$96.9 billion), Germany (\$24.9 billion), or Japan (\$24.4 billion).^{[16][17]} In the same year, French companies invested \$220 billion outside of France, ranking France as the second most important outward direct investor in the OECD, behind the United States (\$311.8 billion), and ahead of the United Kingdom (\$111.4 billion), Japan (\$128 billion) and Germany (\$156.5 billion).^{[16][17]}