



FRENCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Tourism drives the economy of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region

**The Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region of France is a renowned international tourist destination which opens on to the Mediterranean and has much to recommend it: exceptional cultural and natural heritage, a broad range of landscapes, a pleasant climate, a wide variety of accommodation, modern infrastructure, and so on. Tourism has therefore naturally become a major component of the regional economy. Foreign visitors account for one fifth of this tourism.**

France is the top global destination for foreign tourists, with over 84 million visitors in 2013. The PACA region is the number one destination for French tourists and the second most visited by foreign tourists after Paris, drawing in 31 million visitors each year. The region has a huge amount to offer, including accommodation to suit all tastes and budgets; original and delicious traditional food; a rich and varied programme of cultural events; majestic mountain ranges; legendary seaside resorts; and landscapes that have inspired the greatest painters.

The *Marseille-Provence 2013, European Capital of Culture* programme heavily boosted tourism in the area. Nearly eight million people took part in the events that were organized. The



Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM)

Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM), a flagship project within the programme, symbolic of the new seafront in Marseille, has received more than one and a half million visitors since it opened. *“But the work to further the economic development of our region continues. Marseille-Provence 2013 was not only a testing ground for shared ambitions, but also a*

*foretaste of the future Aix-Marseille-Provence conurbation, which will be created on 1 January 2016,”* says Jacques Pfister, president of the Marseille-Provence Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



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According to estimates by the PACA Regional Tourist Board, international tourism accounts for six million visits each year, bringing in revenue of around €5 billion. The region has long been popular with European tourists, as well as visitors from Australia, the United States and Canada; moreover, a regular flight route from Toronto to Marseille has recently been opened. The Regional Tourist Board is now targeting emerging countries with strong growth prospects, such as China, India, Russia, Korea and Brazil.

Tourism is a major source of growth and job creation in the region, generating total annual revenues of €14 billion. The region's many tourists help to sustain a stable economy that accounts for 11% of GDP and provides employment for 150,000 people.

Christian Mantei, managing director of Atout France, the French Tourism Development Agency, emphasizes the wealth of energy and resources supporting tourism in the region:

*"Tourism is evidently central to the PACA regional economy, thanks to the region's natural assets, infrastructure, range of services and clearly defined tourism development strategy. Furthermore, the importance of tourism can be observed throughout the region, not only in coastal areas. It is clearly a major branch of the local economy and visitor numbers are constantly rising, which shows that new customers continue to be drawn in and industry professionals are not resting on their laurels. And that is one of the very reasons why the Mediterranean delegation of Atout France has been based in Marseille for several years now."*



Port of the city of Marseille

**Annik Bianchini**

Websites:

[www.atout-france.fr](http://www.atout-france.fr)

[www.tourismepaca.fr](http://www.tourismepaca.fr)

NB: The claims and opinions contained in this article, which aims to provide information on contemporary France, have no official value.