



France

Well-educated workforce, but still learning to share

An Innovation Leader, the French workforce is better-educated than those of most other nations. Forty-five percent of workers in France earn their wages from highly-skilled professions, and nearly a third of all degrees awarded in France go to graduates of STEM programs.

However, the sharing economy has little support from French regulators, with strict government rules on both ridesharing and short-term rentals.

In 2015, French authorities suspended UberPop, a rideshare program that allowed drivers without a professional license to accept passengers, deeming it an illegal taxi operation for allowing drivers to work without proper certification. In 2016, a French court ordered Uber to pay \$900,000 in fines for the infraction. French startup BlaBlaCar — which allows drivers to carpool with other passengers — has a strong following in the country, but doesn't serve the same market as ridesharing, focusing instead on drives usually longer than 80 kilometers.

Similar regulatory roadblocks obstruct short-term rental hosts. This is especially true in Paris, Airbnb's single largest city market. After a push by the hotel industry to tighten rules on rental sites, Parisian regulators ruled that rental owners must register their property with the local town hall. And in 2017 they threatened to take Airbnb to court if it didn't remove listings by rental owners who hadn't followed the registration rules.

Sources: (TechCrunch) (Bloomberg) (Fortune) (QZ)

WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

The country is on track to see self-driving vehicles on public roads in 2018. French company Transdev entered a partnership with autoparts maker Delphi to put driverless taxis on the roads as early as 2018.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

France should encourage ridesharing by lifting rules that ban rides without professional drivers.

Diversity	B+
Freedom	B
Broadband	B+
Human Capital	B+
Tax Friendliness	D-
R&D Investment	B+
Entrepreneurial Activity	B
Drones	C
Ridesharing	D
Short-Term Rentals	C
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Environment	A-



Human Capital

The percentage of degrees awarded to STEM graduates in France lags behind several other countries, but at 45 percent the proportion of highly-skilled workers in the French workforce outpaces many others.



Diversity

Immigrants make up more than 12 percent of the population, and France has one of the best rates of gender parity of any country.



Entrepreneurial Activity

Has a new business entry rate of 2.26 per 1,000 people and five unicorns. In 2017, French President Emmanuel Macron said the country should focus on producing more successful startups.



Broadband

Average monthly internet costs of \$19.48 and an average internet speed of 14.1 mbps earn France a higher ranking than most countries on the Scorecard.

ANGERS

As Paris seeks to raise its tech profile and welcomes increased attention from global players like Google and Facebook, only a short hop away a small city is making a big name for itself on the world stage.

About 300 kilometers southwest of the French capital, Angers is forging ahead in smart city technology. The city is part of the French Tech program, which partners startups, investors and engineers to bolster the French startup industry, and hosts the WISE'Factory, an 8,000-square-foot hub for design, development and testing of smart devices.

Cité de l'Objet Connecté, a group of 18 companies focused on dramatically reducing the production time for a wide range of smart devices, is also based in the city. The program pairs startups with other local players to ease the way for development from design to integration and, eventually, the launch of a new Internet of Things product.

Angers has also developed itself into a real-world proving ground for IoT technology, including GreenPods, a series of smart flower pots, and WiFiLib, a company that creates free WiFi networks in French city centers.

Sources: (French Tech) (WISE'Factory) (Cité de l'Objet Connecté) (WiFiLib)



The city of Angers has made a name for itself as a hub for smart city technology, hosting programs like the Cité de l'Objet Connecté, which aims to dramatically reduce the amount of time it takes to develop IoT devices by pooling the expertise of local companies and developers.