

Less than half of French citizens go away for at least one week in summer and this is dictated by income, age, as well as occupational activity and personal commitments

In 2015, a quarter of French citizens did not travel and less than half of them went away for at least one week in summer. People on low incomes and those without qualifications, but also the self-employed and those living outside major agglomerations, go away less. Whether or not people go away is also frequently dictated by age and personal commitments. Young people are busy with their studies and summer jobs and the elderly often have health issues or just want to stay at home. The 25-34 age group often have young children and, although those aged between 50 and 64 are more affluent, they frequently mention that they have to look after a relative. Between 2013 and 2015, only one French citizen in four went away for more than a week each summer and more than a third did not go away during any of the three summers. Over the three-year period, the determining factors for going away were the same, with the level of income taking pole position. Differences in circumstances are most pronounced between those on high incomes and those with small salaries. Lastly, proportionally, just as many people living in French départements that have high tourist footfall go away at least once a year but they make fewer and shorter trips.

During 2015, approximately a quarter of French citizens¹ (25.2%) did not take a tourist trip. In other words, almost three quarters (74.8%) did spend at least one night, for personal reasons, away from their usual surroundings (chart 1). For those who did go away, circumstances vary according to the length and timing of the trip, as a week's summer holiday far from home was for many years seen as a sign of social status. Overall, in 2015, 35% of French citizens did not go on holiday², 45.4% did not go on holiday in summer and over half (53.8%) did not take a long holiday³ in summer. Circumstances vary significantly depending on income,

Chart 1: Departure rates for tourism in 2015



Source: DGE, SDT 2015 survey.

age, postcode, profession, qualifications, owning a holiday home or the composition of the household.

Income is the primary determining factor for going away

Income is the most differentiating variable to explain why households do or do not go away. Amongst households earning more than €3,800 per month (21%), only 10.4% did not go away and 64.9% took a long holiday in summer (chart 2). Conversely, amongst households earning less than €1,900 per month (26%), 43.6% did not go away and only 27.9% went on holiday for at least a week during June, July, August or September. As income levels are directly related to professional position, which is itself tied in with qualifications, there are the same varying situations

¹ The survey covers residents of mainland France aged 15 and over. For the purposes of the study, these people are referred to as "French citizens".

² Trip lasting more than four days according to the international definition.

³ Trip lasting at least seven days.

between executives and operatives or office workers, and between university graduates and those with no qualifications⁴.

The self-employed go away less, in particular for long periods. Almost a quarter of the self-employed (24.6%) did not go away in 2015, a figure which is comparable with that for office workers (26%), less than that for operatives or inactive people (31.9%) and far higher than that for executives (8.3%) or middle-level professions (15.8%). On the other hand, only 39.6% of the self-employed took a long holiday in summer, a percentage that is lower than that for operatives (40.7%), office workers or inactive people (41.9%) and far behind that for middle-level professions (54.5%) or executives (63%). The difference is clearly due to the actual activity of the self-employed as they may find it difficult to get away or be busier in summer. Moreover, salaried employees are guaranteed a holiday of at least fifteen consecutive days in summer.

Inhabitants of the Greater Paris area go away more often; families with children travel as frequently as childless couples

As they have greater purchasing power and easier access to transport routes and infrastructure, the inhabitants of major agglomerations, especially the Greater Paris area, go away slightly more often. Single people, some of whom are elderly, go away much less than couples and families. The number of children and having a very young child clearly weigh on the departure rate, the available budget and the type of trip. That said, these people are affected by other factors that are more or less conducive to going away. Overall, there is little difference in the figures for families with a child/children and for childless couples. In 2015, 47.7% of couples took at least a week's holiday in summer, with the percentage standing at 48.3% for households containing three or four people (i.e. essentially couples with two children) and at 49.2% for households with five or more people.

The role played by age appears to be more marked. People aged between 35 and 49 go away the most often, with only 18.8% not having gone away at all and 53.4% having taken a long holiday in summer (chart 3). Both the youngest and most elderly populations go away the least frequently (28.2% of 15-24 year olds do not go away as compared with 33.1% of over 65 year olds). In addition these age groups go away less often for a week in summer (38% and 41.3% respectively). People aged between 25 and 34 or those aged between 50 and 64 are in an intermediate situation.

Each age group has its own constraints

Obviously the reasons for not going away vary according to the age group, with each group having its own constraints. For instance, the most elderly are much more often beset with health issues and 50% of over 65 year olds who did not go away mention such problems versus less than 20% of under 65 year olds, irrespective of the age group (chart 4). Over 65 year olds also most frequently refer to personal choices such as wishing to stay at home or having to look after a pet. On the other hand, they much more rarely mention

⁴ The distinct impact of the different variables was examined using a logistic regression, the results of which are set out in box 1. Although comments are made on the differences without factoring in any potential structural effects connected with other variables, only those variables having a significant effect themselves are mentioned here.

Chart 2: Departure rate according on household income



Key: 43.6% of people with monthly (household) income of less than €1,900 did not go away with the remainder (56.4%) having travelled (aggregate of all green segments). 46.3% went on holiday, 35.4% went on holiday in summer and 27.9% took a long summer holiday.

Source: DGE, SDT 2015 survey.

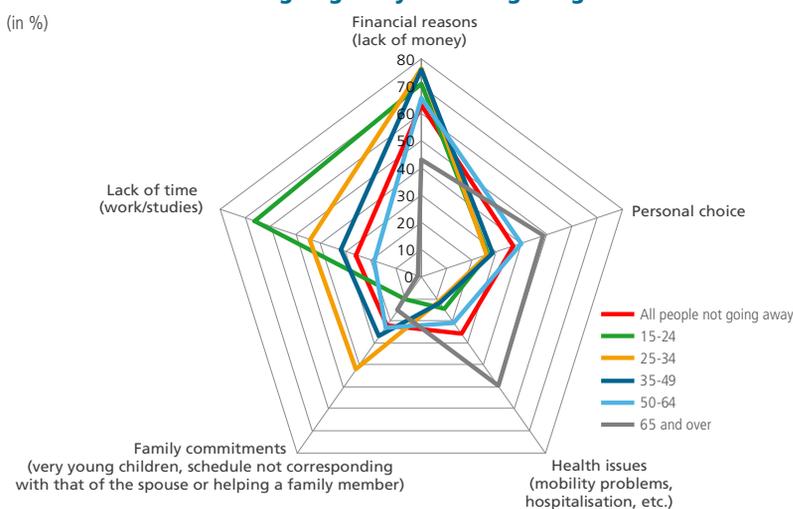
Chart 3: Departure rate according on age



Key: 18.8% of French residents aged between 35 and 49 did not travel with the remainder (81.2%) having travelled (aggregate of all green segments). 67.7% went on holiday, 61.6% went on holiday in summer and 53.4% took a long summer holiday.

Source: DGE, SDT 2015 survey.

Chart 4: Reasons for not going away according to age



Key: People not going away aged between 15 and 24 (green curve) mainly state that they did not go away for financial reasons (71%) or due to lack of time (66%), with relatively few citing family commitments (10%), health issues (15%) or personal choice (27%).

Source: DGE, SDT 2014 survey.

financial problems. 60% to 80% of those who do not go away aged between 15 and 64 and 42% of those aged 65 and over mention a lack of money; this is the main reason for not going away. The youngest age group (15-24) mentions it often but less than the 25-34 or 35-49 age groups. Young people, who are busy with their studies and summer jobs, refer to a lack of time much more often than others. But, they have no family commitments such as an infant, predominant in the 25-34 age group, or a relative to look after, predominant in the 35-49 and 50-64 age groups.

A third of French citizens did not take a long holiday in summer between 2013 and 2015

During the three-year period between 2013 and 2015, 16% of French citizens did not make any personal trips, 21.6% did not go on holiday and 33.8% did not take a long holiday in summer (chart 5). In the latter case, more people did not go away in any of the three years than those who went away every year (26.8%). Almost 40% of French citizens took a long summer holiday once or twice during the three years under review. Obviously the reasons why people did not go away during any of the three years are the same as those explaining why people did not go away during a given year. Nevertheless, variations in profiles are more pronounced between those who systematically did not go away and those who systematically went away than between those who did not go away and those who did go away for a given year. Amongst those who did not take a long holiday in summer in 2015, 34% had monthly income of less than €1,900 and 14% had more than €3,800⁵. And, amongst those who did not take a long summer holiday between 2013 and 2015, 40% had monthly income of less than €1,900 and 10% had more than €3,800.

Very pronounced variations between those having gone away and those having not gone away during all three years

On average, around 40% of executives, middle-level professions, inhabitants of the Greater Paris area, higher education graduates, owners of holiday homes and people having more than €3,800 per month systematically take a long summer holiday. Conversely, more than half of people without qualifications or having less than €1,900 per month did not take a long summer holiday between 2013 and 2015. Amongst the self-employed, inactive people, inhabitants of rural municipalities, persons aged over 65, those living alone or those with a monthly income of between €1,900 and €2,700, almost 40% did not take a long summer holiday between 2013 and 2015.

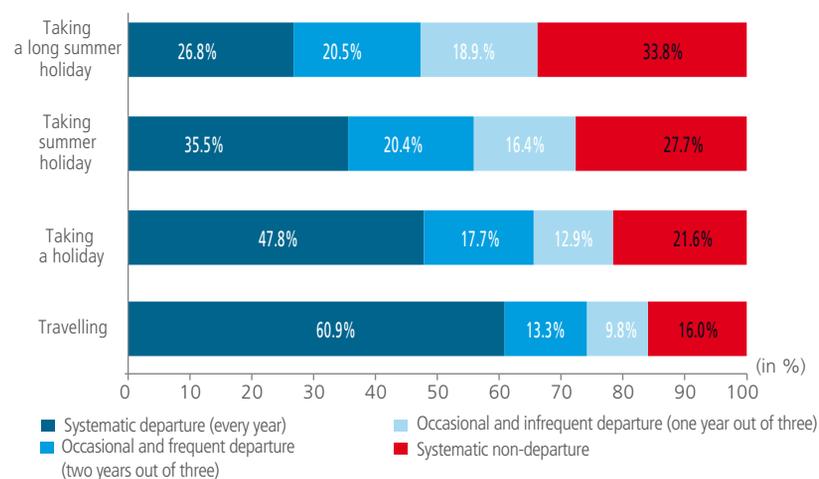
⁵ For the purposes of the survey, monthly income covers the income of all members of a household.

Box 1: Determining factors for going away

Variables	Characteristics	Going away			
		Travel	Holiday	Summer holiday	Long summer holiday
Socio-economic group	Farmer, shopkeeper, craftsperson or company head			-	-
	Senior executive or self-employed	+	+	+	+
	Middle-level profession	+	+	+	+
	Office worker	Reference characteristic			
	Operative	-	-	-	-
Size of agglomeration (number of inhabitants)	Inactive person	-	-	-	-
	1: Less than 2,000	-	-	-	-
	2: 2,000 to less than 20,000				
	3: 20,000 to less than 100,000	Reference characteristic			
	4: 100,000 or more	+	+	+	+
Age group	5: Greater Paris area	+	++	++	++
	15 to 24	--	--	--	--
	25 to 34	-	-	-	-
	35 to 49				
	50 to 64	Reference characteristic			
Qualifications	65 and over	-	-	-	-
	None	--	-	-	-
	BEP, CAP or Baccalaureate	Reference characteristic			
	BA,BS,BSc	+	+	+	+
Household size	MA,MS,MSc,PhD	++	+	+	+
	One person	-	-	-	-
	Two people	Reference characteristic			
	Three or four people	-	-	-	-
Owning a holiday home	Five people or more		-	-	
	Yes	+	++	+	+
	No	Reference characteristic			
Household's monthly income	Less than €1,900	--	--	--	--
	From €1,900 to less than € 2,700	Reference characteristic			
	From €2,700 to less than €3,800€	+	+	+	+
	€3,800 ou plus	++	++	++	++

Key: The results set out above are a summary of logistic regressions that attempt to explain the departure rate (or non-departure rate) using individual variables. A reference characteristic is set for each variable. For each characteristic of each variable, the logistic regression measures whether a difference with the reference situation for this characteristic can have a significant impact, with all the other variables being equal. The sign "+" denotes a positive impact and "++" a substantial positive impact. The sign "-" denotes a negative impact and "--" a substantial negative impact. Where there is no sign, the characteristic has no significant impact in relation to the reference characteristic. With all other things being equal, having no qualifications has a negative impact on the departure rate whereas being a graduate has the opposite effect. The impact (i.e. the measured difference with a reference individual having a CAP, BEP or Bac) is greater for people with MAs and PhDs than for those with BAs.
Source: DGE, SDT 2015 survey.

Chart 5: Systematic departure and non-departure rate over a three-year period



Key: 18.8% of French residents aged between 35 and 49 did not travel and therefore 81.2% did take a trip (aggregate of all the blue segments). 67.7% went on holiday, 61.6% took a summer holiday and 53.4% took a long summer holiday.
Source : DGE, SDT 2013, 2014 and 2015 surveys.

Just as many inhabitants of regions with high tourist footfall go away at least once a year...

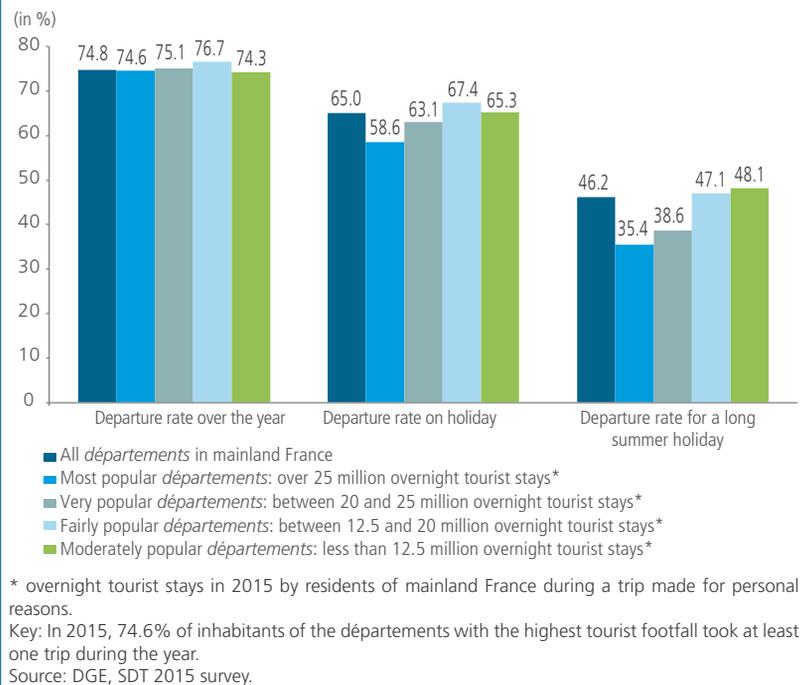
All French regions have tourist attractions but some receive more tourist footfall than others. The *départements* of *Charente-Maritime*, *Hérault*, *Var* and *Vendée* each had over 25 million overnight tourist stays by French residents in 2015. Ten very popular *départements* each had between 20 and 25 million overnight stays (box 2), nine other fairly popular *départements* had between 12.5 and 20 million overnight stays and seventy-one *départements* had less than 12.5 million overnight stays each in 2015. Living in a *département* with high tourist footfall does not affect the departure rate⁶, i.e. it does not have an impact on individuals' ability to leave their usual surroundings at least once for at least one night (chart 6).

...but they make shorter and fewer trips

However, living in a *département* with high tourist footfall does affect the number of trips and their features. The departure rate on holiday or for a long summer holiday is markedly lower for inhabitants of *départements* that already host the largest numbers of French tourists. Inhabitants of the *départements* that have over 25 million overnight stays during the year make 2.8 trips per year whereas the average is 3.6 throughout France and in the other *départements*. On average, they are away from home for 17.5 days per year for personal reasons whereas the average is 21.7 days, giving a difference of almost 20%.

⁶ The departure rate is contingent on the features of individuals in the groups of *départements*. However, standardising the departure rates using income and socio-economic group variables, with an eye to cancelling out the effect of the composition of a population group on the basis of these variables in the comparison, does not alter the findings on the "gross" travel rates provided here. The standardised rates can be consulted in the additional online data.

Chart 6: Departure rate according to the *département's* tourist footfall



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Box 2

Source

The SDT survey, which monitors tourist demand, is carried out each month by post among a group of 20,000 individuals aged 15 years old or older, who are representative of France's resident population. In the survey, "French citizen" means all residents of France, whether French nationals or not.

Method

Departure rate over three years

The structure of the SDT group allows individual's behaviour to be monitored over a number of years. However, the group's renewal rate (a member is questioned for four years on average) means that long-term behaviour cannot be ascertained. For this survey, data on individuals present between 2013 and 2015 was used. The features of individuals (age, socio-economic group, income) are those of the middle year, 2014. Weighting has been adjusted so that these individuals provide a true picture of all residents.

Division of the départements into four groups depending on the number of overnight tourist stays

To assess whether the tourist attractions of the place of residence affect the departure rate, *départements* in mainland France have been divided into four groups depending on the number of overnight tourist stays for personal reasons made by French citizens in these *départements*. The first group (most popular *départements*) comprises the four *départements* that count more than 25 million overnight stays (17, 34, 83, 85). The second group (very popular *départements*) includes *départements* having recorded between 20 and 25 million overnight stays. The third group (fairly popular *départements*) covers *départements* having provided between 12.5 and 20 million overnight stays. The fourth group (moderately popular *départements*) consists of the other *départements*. The two Corsican *départements* are combined.

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