

Summary: France

The Fifth Republic

In 1958, Charles de Gaulle was elected France's president. He began the Fifth Republic of France. De Gaulle also reorganized the constitution.

France is a parliamentary republic. The president and the parliament share power. The president protects the constitution. He or she makes sure other authorities work in the correct way. Parliament is made up of the Senate and the National Assembly. The president chooses a prime minister to head parliament.

When World War II ended, much of the country needed to be rebuilt. Jean Monnet's Planning Board started five-year plans, which set economic goals for France.

As a result, France had a mixed economy with both public and private sections. The French government took over banks, industries, schools, hospitals, and railroads. This was a form of socialism. Today, private companies are slowly taking more control of the French economy.

After 1946, the French economy grew quickly. In the 1970s, the French economy suffered because oil prices rose. France turned to nuclear power in the 1980s. It wanted to depend less on oil.

The European Community began after World War II. Its members hoped the countries of Western Europe could help each other economically. The European Community helped pave the way for the European Union of today.

The Culture of Paris

Paris is the capital city of France and is famous for its culture. It has been nicknamed "City of Light." Paris has inspired most European artists, whether they lived there or not. Edouard Manet was an important painter. He helped create an art movement known as impressionism.

Impressionism is an art style that uses light to create an impression of a scene. Manet inspired many artists. Three of them include Claude Monet, Pierre Renoir, and Paul Cézanne. All of them lived and worked together in Paris.

France is acknowledged for its literature, as well. Writers such as Marcel Proust, Albert Camus, and Simone de Beauvoir are widely respected.



Before You Read

Circle the vocabulary word.

socialism *noun*, a system in which the government owns some businesses and industries

European Community *noun*, an association developed after World War II to promote economic unity in Western Europe

impressionism *noun*, a style of art that creates an impression of a scene



After You Read

REVIEW What is the nickname of Paris? How do you think it was given that nickname? Find and highlight the nickname of Paris and why you think it was given that nickname.