

EU COUNTRY · WESTERN EUROPE

France: What French customers expect

France requires French on products and its own recycling logo, and it has had a supply chain law since 2017. NIS2, on the other hand, has not been transposed yet: the bill is stuck in the National Assembly.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE French	LARGEST CONTAINER PORT Le Havre (HAROPA PORT)	NIS2 not transposed, "Résilience" bill in parliament	DATA PROTECTION AUTHORITY CNIL
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VAT (STANDARD RATE) 20 %

France as a market for South America

France mainly buys agricultural products, raw materials and energy from South America: soybean meal, coffee, fruit, meat and copper. French groups also have a strong presence in the region itself, in retail, energy, construction and the automotive industry. Many business relationships therefore start with the subsidiary in São Paulo, Santiago or Bogotá and only later reach purchasing in Paris.

Le Havre, part of the HAROPA PORT group together with Rouen and Paris, is France's largest container port. Goods for the south of the country also move through Marseille-Fos. Some French imports come in via Antwerp or Rotterdam.

France is also one of the main advocates of strict agricultural and environmental rules in the EU. French buyers pay close attention to origin and production conditions for meat, sugar and grain, especially since the debate over the [EU-Mercosur Agreement](#).

What is the same across the EU and what applies in France

Customs and product law are the same throughout the EU; the basics are in the [export guide](#). Imports are handled by the Directorate General of Customs and Indirect Taxes (DGDDI).

Language: Law No. 94-665 of August 4, 1994 on the use of the French language, known as the Loi Toubon, requires French for the name, offer, description and instructions for use of goods. A translation alongside is allowed. A label only in Spanish or English is not enough for French retail.

VAT: the standard rate is 20 %.

Packaging and marking: Law No. 2020-105 on combating waste and on the circular economy (Loi AGECE) requires the Triman logo and the Info-tri, a notice telling consumers how to dispose of the product or packaging, on products subject to extended producer responsibility. The obligation lies with whoever places the goods on the French market, which for imports means the importer. The importer will often want the marking on the packaging already when it leaves your plant, though. Since August 12, 2026, the EU Packaging Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2025/40) applies as well.

NIS2 in France

France has not yet transposed NIS2. The bill on the resilience of critical infrastructure and the strengthening of cybersecurity ("loi Résilience") was adopted by the Senate on March 12, 2025. In the National Assembly it was taken off the agenda again on October 6, 2026, with no new date set. On July 8, 2026, the Commission took France to the Court of Justice of the EU for failing to transpose.

The competent authority will be the National Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI) with CERT-FR. It has set up the MonEspaceNIS2 portal, where companies have been able to pre-register voluntarily since November 24, 2025, and in March 2026 it published the ReCyF reference framework. Both become binding only with the law and its decrees.

For suppliers, little changes in practice. Large French customers are preparing and already write security clauses into contracts. If you sign a contract with a French energy or healthcare company today, expect the NIS2 obligations to be added later. Documenting your measures along NIS2 now, in [Sightadel](#) or another tool, saves you work when that happens. More under [NIS2](#).

Data protection and supply chain

The data protection authority is the Commission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés (CNIL). Alongside the [GDPR](#), the French Data Protection Act of 1978, as amended, applies. The CNIL inspects actively and regularly imposes fines.

Since Law No. 2017-399 of March 27, 2017, France has had a duty of vigilance for large companies (Loi relative au devoir de vigilance). It applies to companies with at least 5,000 employees in France or 10,000 worldwide, including subsidiaries in each case. They must publish a vigilance plan covering risks to human rights, health, safety and the environment at suppliers with an established business relationship. Affected parties can sue. For you as a supplier, this means questionnaires on working conditions and the environment, and sometimes on-site audits. At EU level, the [CSDDD](#) follows.

What French customers typically ask for

French food retail usually requires an IFS certificate; IFS was developed by German and French retail associations. For fresh produce, GLOBALG.A.P. comes on top. More under [food safety](#).

For soy, coffee, cocoa and beef, [EUDR](#) documentation is mandatory. French buyers often also ask for evidence on pesticides and animal welfare.

IT service providers get questions about [ISO 27001](#) and data location. Data location covers your own tools as well: [Sightadel](#), a GRC platform for ISO 27001 and the GDPR, is developed and hosted in Germany. With government bodies and critical infrastructure operators, French ANSSI qualifications come into play, which are hard to obtain for providers from outside the EU.

A sensible starting point for suppliers to French customers:

1. Have labels and instructions translated into French and agreed with the importer, including Triman and Info-tri.
2. Prepare answers on working conditions and the environment if your customer falls under the Loi de vigilance.
3. Keep IFS or GLOBALG.A.P. certificates and EUDR documents up to date.

Contacts

AREA	OFFICE
Bilateral chambers	CCI France International network, including the French-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (CCI França-Brasil) and CCI France Colombia
Customs	Direction générale des douanes et droits indirects (DGDDI)
Cybersecurity	ANSSI, CERT-FR
Data protection	CNIL
Finding partners	Enterprise Europe Network

The economic sections of the French embassies help with questions on market access and contacts. For labels and Triman marking, your importer is the best contact, because it carries the legal responsibility.

FAQ

Does my label for France have to be in French?

Yes. The Loi Toubon requires French for the name, description and instructions for use. Other languages may appear alongside.

Does NIS2 already apply in France?

No. The "Résilience" bill has not been passed yet (as of October 11, 2026). ANSSI offers voluntary pre-registration on MonEspaceNIS2.

What is the Triman logo?

A mandatory mark under the Loi AGECE that tells consumers a product or package must be sorted for separate disposal. Together with the Info-tri, it must appear on goods subject to extended producer responsibility.

Does the Loi de vigilance affect me?

Indirectly. It requires large French companies to include their suppliers. Your customer will ask about human rights and the environment and can request audits.

Where should I keep compliance documents if a French customer asks about data location?

Ideally in the EU. [Sightadel](#) is developed and hosted in Germany and keeps data in the EU; it covers ISO 27001, NIS2 and the GDPR. ANSSI qualifications are a separate procedure that the platform does not cover.

Sources · Last updated: October 11, 2026

Sénat: Projet de loi Résilience, texte adopté le 12.03.2025: <https://www.senat.fr/leg/tas24-078.html>

ANSSI: La directive NIS 2: <https://cyber.gouv.fr/reglementation/cybersecurite-systemes-dinformation/directives-nis-nis2-et-dispositif-saiv/directive-nis-2/>

Légifrance: Loi n° 2017-399 (devoir de vigilance): <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000034290626>

Légifrance: Loi n° 94-665 (Loi Toubon): <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000349929>

Légifrance: Loi n° 2020-105 (Loi AGECE): <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000041553759>

CNIL: <https://www.cnil.fr/>

European Commission, Your Europe: VAT rates: https://europa.eu/youreurope/business/taxation/vat/vat-rules-rates/index_en.htm

Douane française: <https://www.douane.gouv.fr/>

General information, not legal advice. The official texts are authoritative.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE WITH TOOLS MADE IN GERMANY

 Sightadel

Sightadel walks your team through NIS2: templates, tasks, evidence and audit preparation in one place. Built and hosted in Germany, with an optional consultant package.

[See Sightadel →](#)

 veyrisk

veyrisk shows what attackers can see of your company from the outside: open services, certificates, known vulnerabilities. You can hand the report to EU customers and auditors.

[See veyrisk →](#)

 valar

Valar is a hardware firewall running neonotu software. It protects offices and sites and produces the logs NIS2 and ISO 27001 ask for.

[See Valar →](#)

Sightadel, veyrisk and Valar are products of neonotu GmbH, which operates MercoEU.

Which of these apply to your company?

The free EU Readiness Check shows you by industry and country in 10 minutes.

<https://www.mercoeu.com/en/eu-readiness-check>