

FRANCE SET TO CUT THE TOURISM PROMOTION BUDGET



The French government is considering reducing the budget allocated for the Atout France agency by one third. The project could result in the closure of the French tourism promotion offices abroad.

4 million euros: at first glance, the sum seems modest, but it could weigh heavily in terms of promoting France. While the authorities have been repeating their aim for two years now, the target of reaching 100 million foreign visitors by 2020, **they are also seriously considering this measure of reducing the payroll of Atout France by one third - 12 million euros - by 2020.**

This news has sparked emotions within the Economic Interest Group (GIE), open to private operators (in total, Atout France has 850 members). The project, which would result in the closure of some of the agency's offices abroad, has been leaked diplomatically.

Hence the mobilization of staff representatives, who have been very much moved by the information.

Officials have not confirmed any figures but have noted that "the state has launched a reflection on its networks abroad with a deadline of 2022". European and Foreign Affairs manager, Jean-Yves Le Drian, confirmed that Atout France was also concerned with these measures. The Secretary of State for tourism, Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, opposes this model. "I fought for Atout France. It is a great tool," he said.

"There is a new business project to build. We must make the approach of the state an opportunity," the Secretary of State for tourism said. Moreover, authorities are also planning a "recovery plan". **The movement of the "yellow vests" at the end of the year have dealt a blow to the attractiveness of France affecting the tourism promotion.** In the immediate future, however, Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne confirms that 2018 was a record tourist year, with the number of international visitors reaching about 90 million.

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