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TOURISM

France has seen a 30% to 40% fall in tourists following the coronavirus outbreak: Finance minister

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The drop off in tourist numbers is an “important impact” on France’s economy, Bruno Le Maire, the country’s finance minister, said.

France is one of the most visited countries in the world, and tourism accounts for nearly 8% of its GDP.

Le Maire said France welcomes around 2.7 million Chinese tourists to the country each year, but it “won’t be the same” in 2020.



BREAKING Futures are extending their losses before the open, with the E**VIDEO** 01:02**French finance minister on coronavirus impact on economy**

France's [tourism](#) sector has taken a beating following the [coronavirus](#) outbreak, according to the country's finance minister.

“We have less tourists, of course, in [France](#), about 30%, 40% less than expected,” Bruno Le Maire told CNBC's [Dan Murphy](#) on Sunday at the [G-20](#) Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meetings in Riyadh, [Saudi Arabia](#).

“That's, of course, an important impact for the French economy,” he said.

The new coronavirus infection first surfaced in late 2019 in the Chinese city Wuhan, and [the disease has since killed](#) nearly 2,500 people in [China](#).

Amid travel bans and trip postponements, demand for air travel has fallen, leading to [more than 200,000 flight cancellations](#).

France is one of the most visited countries in the world. [According to the country's Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs](#), 89.4 million visitors toured France in 2018 and tourism accounts for nearly 8% of its gross domestic product.

It also welcomes around 2.7 million Chinese tourists each year, Le Maire said. “It won't be the same, of course, in 2020.”

France has reported 12 confirmed cases of the virus and one death, [according to a WHO report dated Feb. 22](#).

— *CNBC's Leslie Josephs contributed to this report.*



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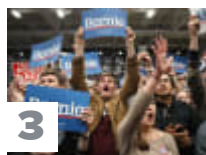
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