**Will The French Really Pay More for 'Made in France'?**

The French economy suffers from many ailments1: weak growth, high unemployment, poor competitiveness and a general sense of economic gloom2. And every proposed government remedy seems to be met by protests from one corner or another.

For the past three days, the Made in France fair has enjoyed huge crowds at a giant convention hall in Paris. There's a bit of everything, from cars to clothing to food to toys. It's a movement that's growing as people see more French companies closing and relocating to places like Eastern Europe and China.

Many companies at the fair are young and hope to take advantage of the new movement, like one called Mon Petit Polo Français, or My Little French Polo. Pierre Grandjean started the French clothing line 18 months ago. And while his company is in competition with a much older brand making traditional Brittany sailor shirts and polos, Grandjean says domestic competition is not his main worry. "What is important is that the consumer understands that Made in France is a real movement that is useful for jobs, for the economy and for the country," he says.

A recent poll found that 73 percent of French people are ready to spend more to buy French. They include Josette and Thierry Dupont, who are visitors to the fair. "We have become distracted by cheap products for too long. Now we want to put some more money down to have better quality," says Josette Dupont. "We have everything we need in France. Why are we buying from somewhere else? It doesn't make any sense," says Thierry Dupont. But the Duponts acknowledge that French taxes and labor costs force French companies to leave. Analysts say France has lost 750,000 industrial jobs in the past decade.

Damien Biro has brought his prototype hybrid sports car to the exhibit. He's confident the car will be a success when production starts next year. And what does he think about the Made in France campaign?

"In France, we have very good knowledge in engineering and handmade things. We value quality. In a way, we are very expensive, but it's in the long term, very economic and useful," says Biro.

As we leave the fair, my 7-year-old son and I pass a stand for Paris Cola, a fizzy brown copy of Coca-Cola made right here in the City of Light. I ask him if it's as good as Coke. "Nah," he says.

Clearly, the Made in France campaign doesn't work for everyone.

by [Eleanor Beardsley](http://www.npr.org/people/17796129/eleanor-beardsley)

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*2economic gloom: marasme économique*