

## Report: French morale at 20-year low

*by UPI*

PARIS - A report by French government researchers said morale in France is at its lowest point since they started tracking it in 1987. The report said French people's belief that their living standards will improve has declined steadily since President Nicolas Sarkozy took office last June. The gloom has been exacerbated by rising fuel and food prices, the Daily Telegraph said. Sociologist Gerard Mermet, however, said "collective pessimism is engraved in French culture." He told the newspaper France knowingly plays up its economic and social ills, while glossing over its strengths. "In all studies if you ask the French about the state of the country, they say 'it's bad' but when you ask them if they are personally happy, the vast majority -- around 85 percent -- say 'yes,'" Mermet said.

Â© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

*Report: French morale at 20-year low by UPI*