

2010

Receiving foreign students in France



Promoting student mobility

Foreign student and researcher mobility: making France more attractive

The assets enabling France to attract researchers, professors, students and companies must be emphasized and developed in coordination with all the players concerned. French universities need to become more internationally competitive in order to attract the best foreign students, whose presence helps compensate for the relative scarcity of callings in scientific domains among French students, particularly at the doctoral level. Our country must also **place positive emphasis on the recent changes and reforms in French universities, the measures facilitating foreign investment in France and the development of incentive programs encouraging exportation.**

The Mobility and Attractiveness Policy Directorate of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE) is based on the competitive clusters "model." These clusters, which include research laboratories, universities and companies from a given region, were created in 2005 as part of regional town and country planning. From the outset, their goal was to encourage teamwork among players generally unaccustomed to this type of coordination. Similarly, combining these three sectors (business, research laboratories and universities) under a single administrative umbrella makes it possible to surpass increasingly porous borders and address the issues relating to international mobility with all of these influential French players.



Alliance française in Vladivostok (Russia) © MAEE/F. de La Mure



A strategy for attractiveness

Incentive programs implemented

To encourage the presence of foreign students and researchers in our higher education establishments, France has taken **several steps** over the past years:

- Creation of a **National Research Agency** with a view to increasing the number of research projects.
- Creation of **PRES** (poles of research and higher education) which enable universities, *grandes écoles* and research organizations to pool resources and activities.
- Increased **budget** at the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research.
- Increased **autonomy of universities**, in accordance with the French law relative to the freedom

and responsibility of universities, which authorizes universities to create foundations for private fundraising.

CampusFrance is the French operational structure dedicated to international mobility. Present in over one hundred foreign countries, CampusFrance centers work together with French establishments of higher education under the auspices of French embassies abroad. Their aim is to promote higher education among foreign students, in particular through education fairs. CampusFrance centers advise and guide foreign students who are planning to study in France, and are the dedicated point of contact for all administrative procedures prior to students' arrival in France.

FRENCH-BRAZILIAN WEEK OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Organized jointly by CampusFrance, the French Embassy and CenDoTec, this event was held from October 2-8, 2009 in São Paulo, Belo Horizonte and Rio de Janeiro.

The French-Brazilian Week of Higher Education was the major academic event of an extremely dense political, cultural and scientific agenda: the *Year of France in Brazil in 2009*. The Week's themes were inspired by the latest strategic agreements signed between France and Brazil in late 2008 concerning the environment, energy, transportation, aerospace and vocational training. Each theme was represented throughout or at various stages of the event.

Mirroring the events organized in 2005 during the Year of Brazil in France, the *French-Brazilian Week of Higher Education* comprised a variety of activities, including symposiums, student fairs, meetings and workshops. It targeted a range of audiences, including French and Brazilian universities, companies and students.

110 French and Brazilian institutions took part in French-Brazilian Week, whose various fairs (targeting Masters and Doctorate students) drew 7,500 visitors.

Through this event, 700 targeted student interviews were conducted (following resume-based selection) and 150 inter-university meetings took place with a view to signing cooperation agreements. These figures attest to the Week's outstanding performance, recognized by establishments, partners and media alike.



CampusFrance Week in Brazil © CampusFrance

The attractiveness of our academic establishments also depends on how foreign students are received. For this, the MAEE created a **quality charter** signed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, establishment conferences and the relevant operators (Égide and CNOUS). These parties commit to monitoring how well foreign recipients of French government

scholarships integrate into their host establishment and, more generally, the conditions under which all foreign students are received in France.

The **Alfred Kastler National Foundation** helps ensure foreign researchers are well received in France, thanks to a partnership policy with research organizations.

ÉGIDE SUPPORTS THE PROGRAM “300 YOUNG EXECUTIVES FOR MALI”

This program of excellence, equally financed by the MAEE and Mali, recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. It has already enabled 162 young Malian scholars to receive training in France, with support from Égide.

The program’s goal is to train 300 young Malian executives in France, in order to meet Mali’s need for high-level executives in its companies and Senior Civil Service.

Training needs were determined in conjunction with major Malian corporations, which defined their expectations in terms of employment. This facilitates the selection of new recipients, who are oriented toward the priority industries,

chiefly in science, technology and economics & management.

162 young students received a scholarship from the French or Malian government to complete a full master’s or doctoral program in France. In 2009, a budget of €780,000 was allocated to this program by the French Embassy in Bamako.

Égide manages the stay of French government scholarship recipients, who account for half of all scholars in the program. It offers them a range of services, including travel arrangements, payment of the scholarship, housing assistance, administrative procedures, insurance and academic monitoring.

Local monitoring is also offered by Joseph Fourier University, a partner of the program, during the first two years of study within the Valence university system.

This program of excellence has a very rigorous selection process, requiring a grade point average of at least 14 out of 20 (20 being the highest possible score in the French grading system) in high school, on the French baccalauréat exam, and on the written and oral examinations for acceptance into the program. This rigor is also reflected in the academic path of the students, several of whom have already been accepted to École polytechnique and École centrale Paris, two prestigious schools in Paris. The program’s established good reputation helps graduates secure jobs upon their return to Mali.



Égide supports young Malian executives © Égide/Daniel Albert



Aiming for excellence in scholarship policy

The scholarships granted by the MAEE to foreign students naturally contribute to the attractiveness of France. In 2009, the MAEE allocated a **budget of €86 million to finance these scholarships**. It aims to increase the number of partners involved by encouraging companies and territorial communities to participate in efforts to train foreign students, some of whom receive direct financial aid from their government. 80% of these allocations are financed via the budget of French embassies abroad, which determine the allocation criteria in conjunction with local authorities. Through the **Eiffel Program**, the MAEE also grants scholarships to fulfill geographic (emerging Asian and Latin American countries) and thematic priorities (law and political science, economics and management, fundamental science and engineering science). In addition, each year the **Major Excellence Scholarship Program** helps the best foreign students in French high schools abroad pursue high-level studies in the French system of higher education.

Develop partnerships

- With the **major French industrial groups** in high technology sectors, to attract more students from emerging countries. Programs like the Thales-MAEE program make it possible to co-finance close to 150 students.
- With governments financing their students in France: India, Venezuela, Chile, Pakistan, Syria, Brazil, Gabon and Indonesia.

Support the training courses of French institutions abroad

French universities and schools develop their activities abroad either by offering joint degree or dual degree programs – particularly in European countries – or by “exporting” certain curriculums abroad, such as École centrale in Beijing and University of Paris IV in the United Arab Emirates. In addition, certain universities are created abroad with support from the MAEE, such as **the Hanoi University of Science and**



Technology project, the French University in Egypt and the Franco-Armenian University. In general, the MAEE strives to develop university exchange programs with emerging countries from all five continents.

Lastly, special attention is given to **research in social and human sciences** and to archeology through 27 French Research Institutes Abroad (IFRE) and 160-some archeological missions supported by France throughout the world. These institutes and missions provide opportunities to showcase French know-how and expertise.

THE MAEE'S ACTION IN SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

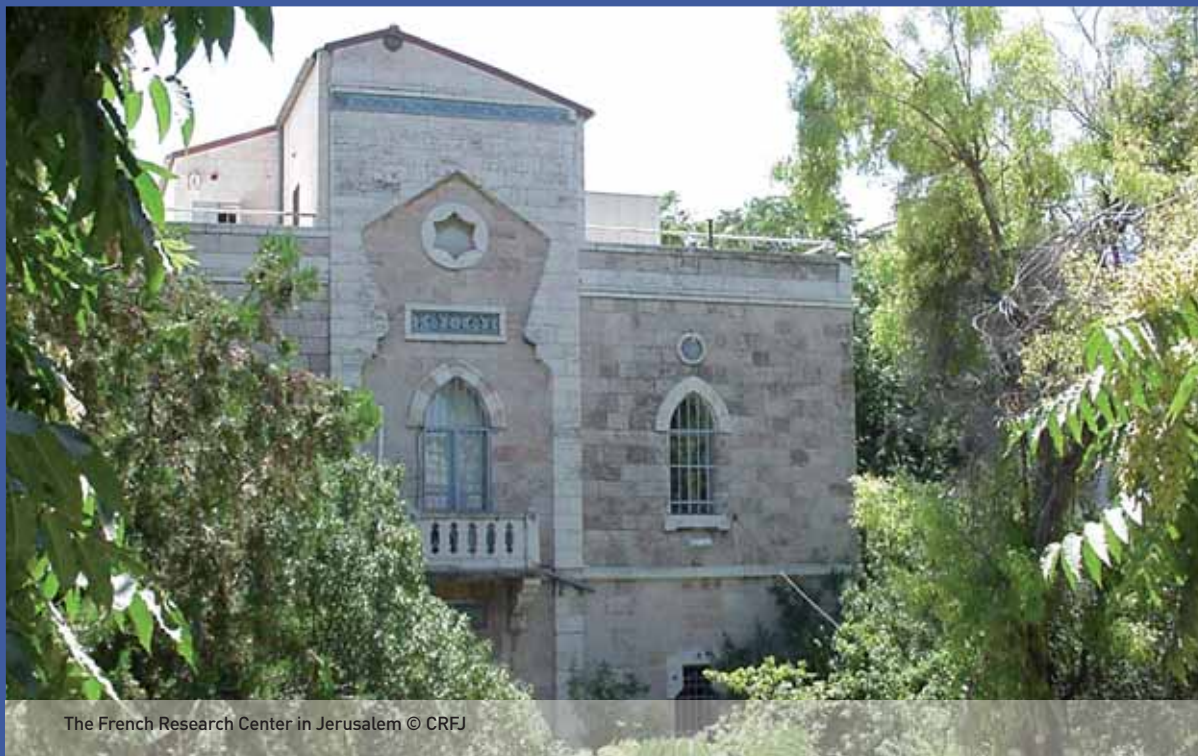
In the area of social and human sciences, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs acts directly by implementing several instruments, including:

- network of 27 French Research Institutes Abroad (IFRE), present in 35 countries and encompassing close to 250 researchers, including around 100 foreign, permanent or associate researchers.
- 160 French archeological missions abroad (in 2010), which largely contribute to the mobility and attractiveness of France.
- The promotion of French research excellence, with many projects financed by the French National Research Agency (on average, close

to 10% of establishments' earnings in 2010) and publications in accordance with the highest standards.

- French training courses available abroad.
- Development of partnerships between French research institutes abroad and national or regional academic institutions (180 active in 2010).
- Support in favor of French and foreign researcher mobility through hosting programs and high-level scholarships.

Through its contribution to the bilateral political dialogue, its research topics adapted to regional contexts, its expertise, participation in debates and diplomatic analysis, the network of research institutes abroad helps France provide solutions to global and development-related issues.



The French Research Center in Jerusalem © CRFJ



A strategy for mobility

In today's globalized economy, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE) strives to facilitate maximum international mobility for students, researchers and entrepreneurs. As the coordinator of French presence abroad, the MAEE offers these players particularly useful expertise and on-the-ground knowledge.

Promoting research

The presence of French researchers in international networks and of foreign researchers in France is particularly encouraged in order to optimize the **competitiveness of French and European research on the international scene and promote research for development**. France also strives to strengthen partnerships with industrialized countries in key sectors of research and innovation, while high-level scientific programs are also developed with major emerging countries.

The MAEE's actions are part of an **inter-ministerial strategy** and are carried out in close collaboration with the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research. While public institutions (universities, *grandes écoles*, research organizations, establishment conferences) help define and conduct projects, the **private sector will become increasingly involved** in these partnerships. Among the bilateral scientific programs, **the Hubert Curien Partnerships (PHC)** are particularly noteworthy. Around 60 of these partnerships are currently underway. Project selection criteria include scientific quality, innovation and the training received by

participants. PHCs have a significant "lever effect," as they enable French laboratories to subsequently position themselves in response to European calls for tender in research.

Cooperation actions are co-financed by certain regions as part of **the ARCUS program** (regional action for academic and scientific cooperation). Such actions are often interdisciplinary.

The integration of French universities within international networks as well as the harmonization of university degrees within Europe make it easier for French students to study abroad. **One of the goals is for all French students to receive part of their training outside of France**, by capitalizing on the myriad opportunities offered by European study abroad programs such as ERASMUS, but also through partnerships between French and foreign establishments.



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The EIFFEL program

The EIFFEL excellence scholarship program was first launched in 1999.

This program makes it possible to finance either a Master's level course or a 10-month study abroad as part of joint thesis supervision arrangement. It aims to meet the following objectives:

- To train, in French institutions of higher education, future foreign decision-makers in the public and private domains. The three priority fields of study are science, economics and management, law and political science;
- To encourage applicants from emerging countries.

Since it was launched, the EIFFEL program has **awarded scholarships of excellence to 4,163 Master's students** out of more than 13,000 applicants and to 365 doctoral students out of 1279 applicants. Current recipients include 400 Master's students and 70 doctoral students.

Half of these students are from Asia and close to one-third are from Latin or Central America. In 2009, the largest contingents were from China and Brazil, followed by India, Russia and Vietnam.

This program is unanimously recognized as contributing to the attractiveness of France. It offers the best foreign students a French academic path of excellence and plays a particularly useful role in expanding the international scope of French higher education institutions.



Reception for Eiffel program scholars, 11 December 2009 © MAEE/Cyril Bailleul



© Jujhar Singh Pharwaha

Mr. Jujhar Singh Pharwaha

EIFFEL Class of 2008 – 25 years of age

École polytechnique/ENSEA – Paris

Networks and Telecommunications Engineer

Complex Industrial Systems Engineering

Nationality: **Indian**

Place of residency: **Montrouge, France**

Current position: **Orange S.A.**

Project Manager: **Value-added services, Service Platform Division**

“ I started by looking into English-speaking countries only, like most of my friends. Then I turned to Europe, particularly Scandinavia, France and Germany. As an engineering student in India, I found out that certain French engineering schools admit students into the second year of their engineering programs and offer both French-language and technical courses. This unique opportunity to learn a language during

my studies really appealed to me. After attending a presentation by ENSEA in Delhi, my father and I knew I would be properly received and that the school's ranking and level in electronics were good. I applied to ENSEA, which presented my application to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs for an EIFFEL scholarship, which I was fortunate enough to receive. I now work as a project manager for Orange. ”



The Cité internationale universitaire in Paris offers a warm welcome and accommodations to foreign students © MAEE/F. de La Mure

Quai d'Orsay/Entreprises

The "Quai d'Orsay/Entreprises" program was created in 2006. It coordinates **scholarship programs co-financed by companies and the MAEE**, whether they are initiated and overseen by French embassies or by the central administration. The program was designed for implementation in all countries, and helps develop the attractiveness of France internationally by meeting four main objectives:

- Support the action of **French companies** in favor of young foreign elites;
- Support the international ambitions of **French institutions of higher education**;
- Encourage **the best foreign students** in their desire to share knowledge and skills at the highest level.
- Increase **French means of action** in the face of globalization.

Through the "Quai d'Orsay/Entreprises" program, France co-finances scholarships with French companies. The industrial and economic successes of these firms abroad, particularly in the field of cutting-edge technologies,

assure them recognized credibility on the international scene. This public-private cooperation encourages and develops study in France by foreign students from the best establishments in their home countries.

To enable access under optimal conditions to a post-secondary education in a well-reputed French establishment of higher education with a direct link to the professional world, the "**Quai d'Orsay/Entreprises**" program offers **partnership agreements** to companies that make it possible to combine MAEE resources with funds from the private sector as well as renowned French universities and *grandes écoles*.

Six programs have been launched since 2006, in a spirit of high-level collaboration and skills sharing: **THALES** (2006); **ORANGE**, **DCNS** and **ALTEN** (2008); **CREDIT AGRICOLE S.A.** and **AIR LIQUIDE** (2010).

Since 2006, 201 students have been received in France, including 51 for the 2008/2009 school year, mainly originating from **India**, but also from **China** and **Russia** starting in 2007/2008, then **Brazil** in 2008/2009.



Qian Sun (China)

Master's degree in risk management from HEC Paris, with support from the Thales Academia program, co-financed by the Thales Group and the MAEE.

“ I received a warm welcome when I arrived in France, not only from the French government (Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs) but also the Thales Group. Thanks to my mentor, I was able to discover the fascinating world of Thales through various encounters and explore different professional opportunities to fit my profile.

I was particularly attracted to the international environment offered by Thales. The Group eventually offered me a position as a risk analyst, which is perfectly in line with my educational background. ”

The MAEE:

- **Coordinates** these partnerships;
- Is involved abroad in **informing** the best students from local establishments about the full range of its scholarship programs.
- Provides the **expertise** of its network of cultural and scientific cooperation.
- Attributes **French Government Scholarship Recipient status** to the beneficiaries, which includes health insurance coverage and the attendant advantages (facilitation of the visa procedure, cultural activities, etc.)

- Offers scholarship recipients intensive **French language courses** before their departure, held in Alliance Française centers in their home country.

Companies grant each student a **scholarship**, a **mentor** within the company and **career planning support** at the end of their coursework, possibly leading to a job offer.

Receiving foreign students – the future elite of their home countries – in our leading establishments of higher education is a major asset that the MAEE intends to sustain and intensify.



Alliance française in Arequipa (Peru) © MAEE/F. de La Mure

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Directorate-General of Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

The missions of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs are:

- summarize information on the changing global economy and put it into perspective, prepare decisions on the French government's foreign policy;
- draft France's foreign policy;
- coordinate France's international relations;
- protect French interests abroad and assist French nationals outside France.

The creation of the Directorate-General of Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships (DGM) in April 2009, as part of the reform of the Ministry, enables diplomacy to anticipate, identify and respond to the challenges of globalisation more effectively.

Confronted with global issues that have a direct impact on the lives of our citizens and multiple actors, the Ministry intends to emphasise the need to tackle global issues, in the firm belief that every major economic, cultural and societal issue calls for collective action with more outward focus, anticipation, interministerial coordination, responsiveness, interdisciplinarity and a resolutely European approach.



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