



CampusFrance

Higher education in France



December 2008



CampusFrance - Higher education in France

Key figures

- ◆ France 2007 : 23.7 billion Euros invested by the French government in HE
- ◆ 2007-2008 : 2 228 000 students
- ◆ 3500 Higher Education institutions
- ◆ 2500 degrees programmes offered



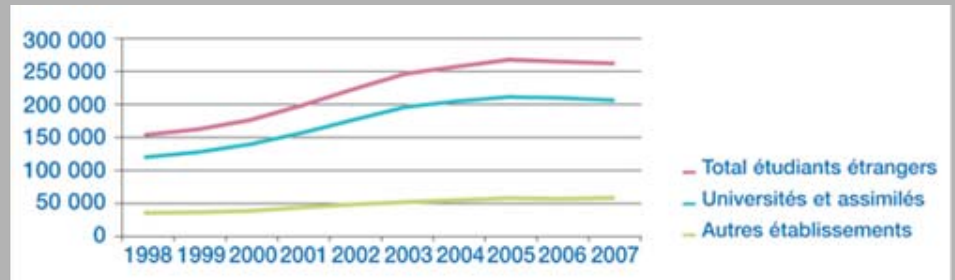


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Key figures

- ◆ France's system of higher education enrolls more than 2.2 million students.
- ◆ 260,000 come from outside France and make up 12% of postsecondary enrollments.
- ◆ By comparison, international students are 14% of British and 13% of German enrollments.

Growth in international student enrollment in French institutions of higher education since 1998





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A European qualifications framework

French higher education is divided into 3 stages in accord with the harmonized European system. The stages are marked by degrees: *licence* (bachelor), master, doctorate (LMD).

The time to degree is measured in terms of semesters of study and corresponding “ECTS credits.”

- ◆ *Licence* (L) = 6 semesters = 180 ECTS credits
- ◆ Master (M) = 4 semesters = 120 ECTS credits
- ◆ Doctorate (D) = 3 or more years following the master (not expressed in ECTS credits)

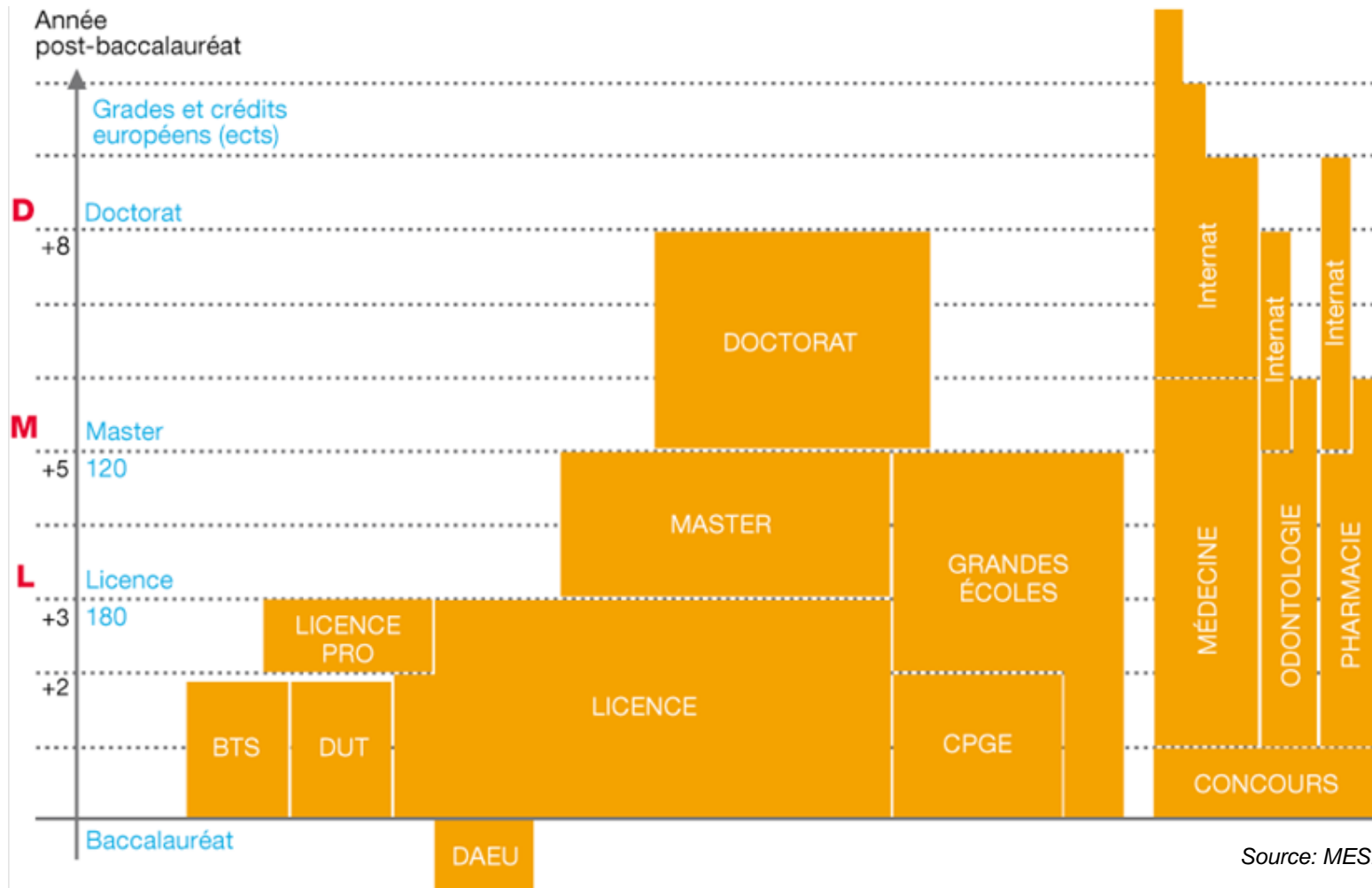
ECTS, the European Credit Transfer System, is a common European System of cumulable, transferable credits that reflect the time a student has spent in higher education.

The system facilitates intra-European mobility of students over their academic career.



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Postsecondary degrees in France





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Institutions of higher education

More than 3,500 postsecondary institutions-public and private-operate in France:

- 88 universities and affiliated institutions (accounting for 70% of enrollments)
- 224 engineering schools (1/4 university-affiliated)
- 220 schools of business and management (90 confer degrees recognized by the government)
- 120 schools of art
- 20 schools of architecture
- 3,000 other schools and institutes



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The nation's universities

All of France's 83 universities and affiliated institutions are public.

- ◆ The universities are comprehensive, covering all disciplines.
- ◆ Of the 1.4 million students enrolled, 70,000 are doctoral candidates.
- ◆ Any student holding a French *baccalauréat* or equivalent diploma may enroll in the first year of university study. Enrollment is open.
- ◆ The universities award so-called national diplomas-*licence*, master, doctorate-as well as other degrees specific to each institution.
- ◆ Many university degree programs have a professional orientation-among them the DUT, the *licence professionnelle*, the professional master, and teacher-training programs.



The “grandes écoles”

The postsecondary institutions known as “*grandes écoles*” may be public or private. They include schools of engineering, the *écoles normales supérieures*, the institutes of political science, schools of business and management, veterinary colleges, and other specialized schools.

- ◆ Admission is highly selective. Most students are admitted after 2 years of preparatory study based on (i) their performance on an entrance exam or (ii) their academic record. Schools that offer the preparatory curriculum in-house admit students directly out of secondary school.
- ◆ Schools recognized by the French government confer a degree that represents 5 years of postsecondary study. Some of these degrees (e.g., the nationally regulated engineering degree) are the equivalent of a European master.
- ◆ 285,000 students are enrolled in the nation’s 584 *grandes écoles*.



Other postsecondary schools and specialized institutes

Complementing the offerings of the universities and *grandes écoles*, more than 3,000 tuition-charging institutions, public and private, offer postsecondary degrees in specific disciplines.

- ◆ Free-standing schools and institutes specialize in health, paramedicine, media, communication, journalism, social work, fashion, design, tourism, cooking, military arts, agriculture, agronomy, and political science, among others.
- ◆ These institutions confer state-sanctioned diplomas as well as other degrees and certificates that are not recognized or regulated by the government.
- ◆ Some programs require as few as 2 years, others as many as 5.



Recent developments

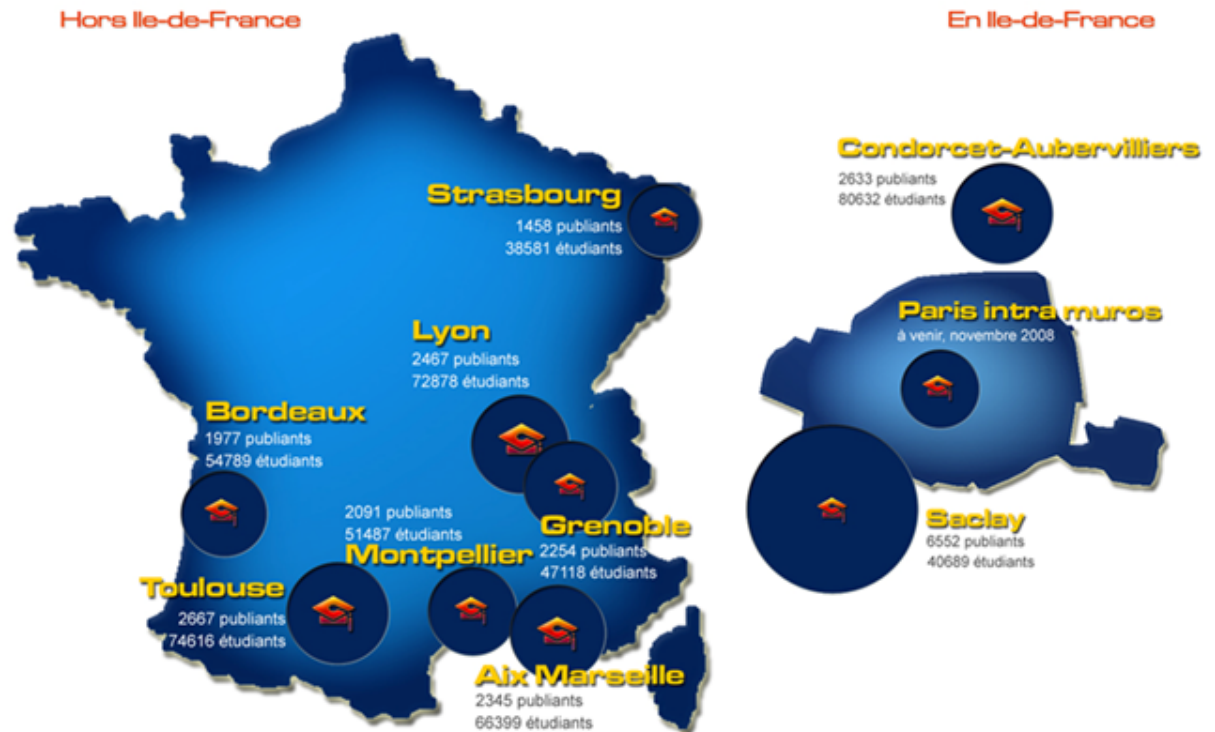
- ◆ 2010-2015 : Public support for education and research to rise by €10 to €15 Bn
- ◆ 3 main trends of changes :
 1. Increasing the autonomy of universities (New legislation on academic freedom and responsibility)
 2. Improving university facilities and increasing the dynamism of campus life.
(Operation Campus)
 3. Creating new structures to realigne HE and research efforts :
 - PRES (research and higher education clusters),
 - RTRAs (thematic networks for advanced research), RTRS (thematic networks for medical research)
 - competitiveness clusters



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Recent developments (2) - Operation Campus

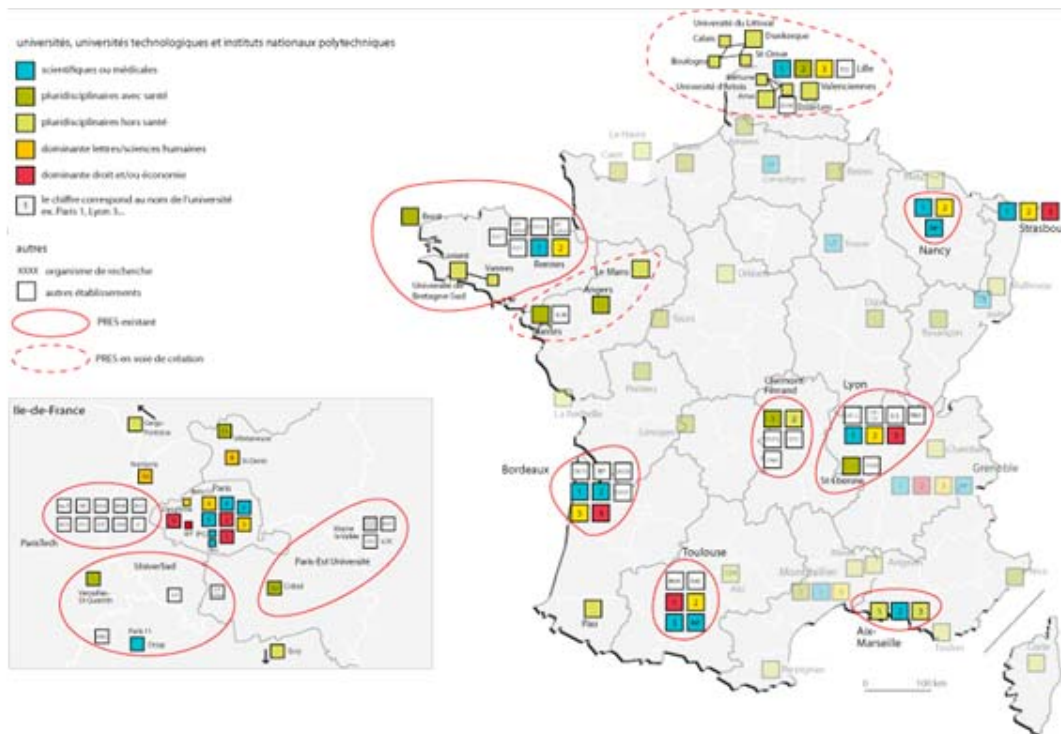
- ◆ National program for the renovation of university facilities (Launched in February 2008)
- ◆ Through a massive investment, it will elevate France's university campuses to the highest international standards.
- ◆ Selection of 10 projects



Source: MESR, July 2008

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Recent developments (3) – New structures



- ◆ A new system of research and education clusters (PRES) adopted by law in April 2006 to end the splintering of university activity, especially research
- ◆ PRES are tools for the sharing of research resources, assets, and tasks among public and private institutions of HE in a given region.
- ◆ PRES enable institutions of HE and research to operate at a scale that heightens their international visibility and reputation

Recent developments (3) – New structures

Competitiveness clusters

The policy of organizing competitiveness clusters, introduced in September 2004, was designed to strengthen France's industrial competitiveness through investment in sites where industrial and research activities are concentrated.

The specific goals of the competitiveness clusters are:

- ◆ to reinforce **linkages** between industry and research and between industry and education
- ◆ to stimulate the cooperative pursuit of **innovation**
- ◆ to encourage and sustain **initiatives** conceived by the economic and academic actors of a given region.

71 competitiveness clusters have been formed in France. Of these, 7 are global clusters, 10 aspire to global status, and 54 are national.



Recent developments (3) – New structures

Thematic networks for advanced research (RTRAs)

France's thematic networks for advanced research, established under research-support legislation in 2006, are designed to promote the emergence and growth in France of science sites that will be recognized as world leaders in their fields.

- ◆ The RTRAs assemble highly qualified researchers in a small core of geographically proximate research units to pursue a shared strategy and common goals.
- ◆ The RTRAs provide research training while also performing scientific research.

13 RTRAs have been in operation since 2007.



CampusFrance – The French higher education system

| Why study in France ?

- ◆ **Top quality** HEIs and study and research programmes
- ◆ One of the leading host countries for international students
- ◆ **Internationally recognised** degrees
- ◆ Cooperation with foreign HEIs and strong **links with industry**
- ◆ Improved **career prospects** for international students
- ◆ Excellent **value for money** – programmes heavily subsidized by the French government (**2.5 bn.€ invested annually** in courses for international students)
- ◆ International students have access to same benefits as French students
- ◆ Specific **hosting arrangements** for international students
- ◆ **Made-to-measure services** and tuition available
- ◆ Located at the heart of Europe
- ◆ Students become proficient in the **French language** and benefit from the French way of life





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National agency for promoting
French higher education abroad

- ◆ 1998 : creation of EduFrance founded by the French government
- ◆ In 2007, EduFrance became CampusFrance.
- ◆ CampusFrance is placed under the supervision of several Ministries and has 227 members (French HEIs)
- ◆ CampusFrance is dedicated to promoting international mobility for students, academics and researchers.

