

ESSENTIALS OF THE FRENCH HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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FRENCH HIGHER EDUCATION : KEY FIGURES

- Total number of enrolled students 2 680 400 (2017-2018)
+20% compared to 2007-2008
- Public spending for higher education : 30,3Bn €, representing 1,5% of GDP (2016)
- Average government spending per student : 11 510€ per year (2016)

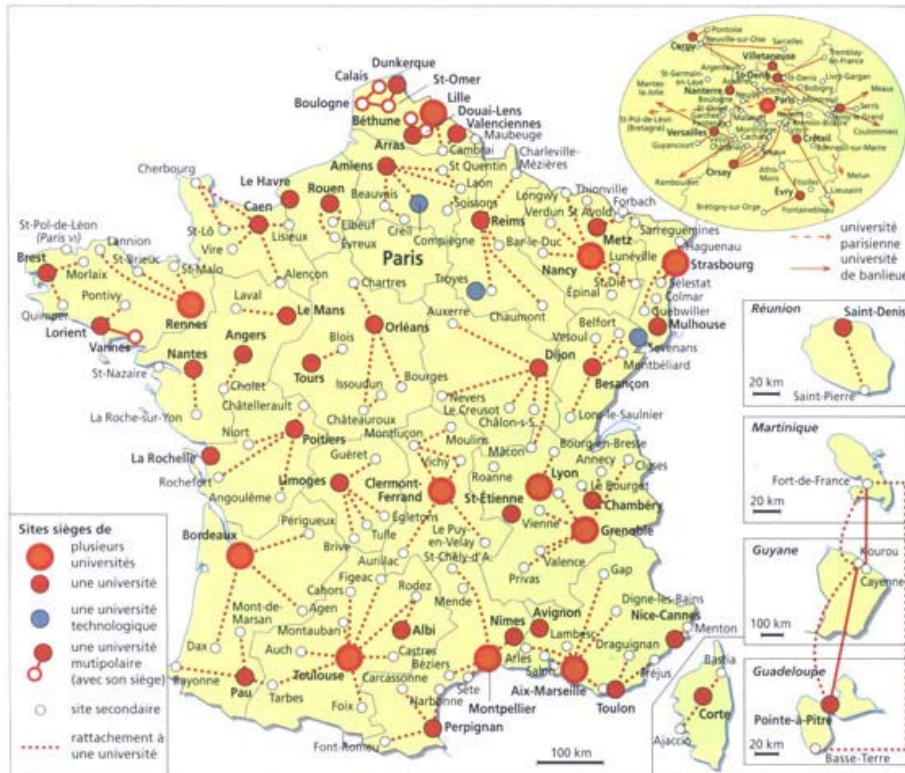
GENERAL FRAMEWORK FOR FRENCH DEGREES

- The general framework of the degrees awarded in French higher education is the European “LMD” system—for Licence (bachelor), Master, and Doctorate—based on the number of semesters completed after leaving secondary school and their equivalent in European credits under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)*
- The “Baccalauréat” is the entry level into higher education

<i>Licence (Bachelor)</i>	6 semesters	180 ECTS (Baccalauréat or equivalent + 3 years)
Master	10 semesters	300 ECTS (180 of L + 120 of M) (Baccalauréat or equivalent + 5 years)
Doctorate	16 semesters	480 ECTS (L + M + D) (Baccalauréat or equivalent + 8 years)

FRENCH UNIVERSITIES

73 publicly financed universities, all around the national territory



■ Enroll the majority of students :

1 525 000 (2017-2018)

■ Award national diplomas, based on uniform standards of quality

■ Cover all disciplines

■ Provide all levels of degrees (L, M, D) as well as professional programmes

■ All have a research activity

■ Total staff of universities : 154 0600, among which 94 600 involved in teaching (2016-2017)

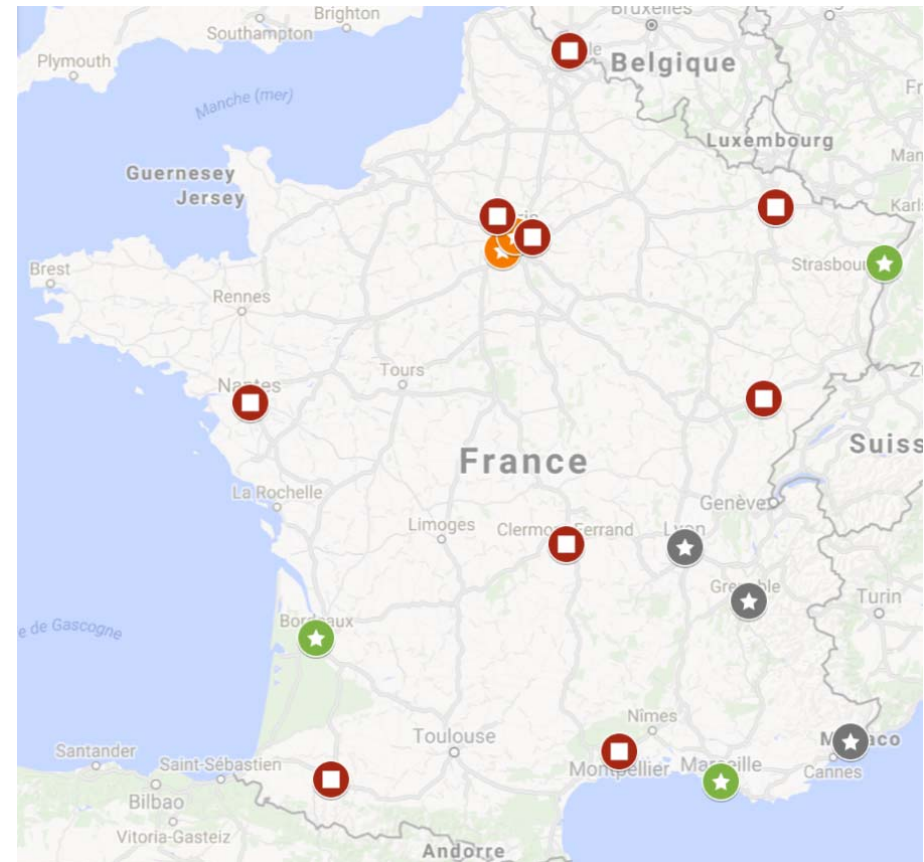
THE FRENCH « GRANDES ECOLES »

- A specific feature, inherited from history (set up in parallel with the university system since the 18th century)
- Main feature : highly selective / competitive admission :
 - Either directly after “baccalaureat”
 - Or after “preparatory classes” (usually 2 years) :
- Main fields :
 - Engineering : more than 200 schools
 - Business and management : 220 schools
 - Arts (120 schools)
 - Architecture (20 schools)...
- Usually deliver their own diploma



BUILDING EXCELLENCE CLUSTERS: IDEX & I-SITE TOWARDS TOP WORLD RANKING INSTITUTIONS

- Bring together universities, grandes ecoles, national research centers, and enhance collaboration with companies
- Integrate Higher Education, Research and Innovation
- Encourage mergers
- Enhance international visibility and attractivity



IDEX: « Initiatives d'Excellence » (comprehensive)



I-SITE Initiatives « Science – Innovation – Territoires – Economie »
(thematically specialised)

Higher Education: incoming student mobility in France

- 343 000 foreign students in France in 2017-2018
- Among them, 181 400 foreign students were completing a mobility in institutions affiliated to the Ministry of Higher education, Research and Innovation.

Top 25 des pays d'origine des étudiants étrangers en France (2017-2018)

Pays d'origine	Nombre d'étudiants	Part	Évolution sur 5 ans (2012-2017)	Évolution du rang	
				2012	2017
Maroc	39 855	12%	+24%	1	1
Algérie	30 521	9%	+34%	3	2
Chine	30 072	9%	-1%	2	3
Italie	13 341	4%	+58%	7	4
Tunisie	12 842	4%	+8%	4	5
Sénégal	10 974	3%	+22%	5	6
Allemagne	8 459	2%	-4%	6	7
Côte d'Ivoire	8 085	2%	+80%	16	8
Espagne	7 826	2%	+32%	10	9
Cameroun	6 878	2%	-7%	8	10
États-Unis	6 264	2%	+33%	13	11
Portugal	5 901	2%	+51%	20	12
Liban	5 665	2%	+24%	14	13
Vietnam	5 589	2%	-11%	9	14
B Brésil	5 423	2%	+10%	12	15
Russie	5 337	2%	+7%	11	16
Congo	4 875	1%	+45%	24	17
Belgique	4 798	1%	+22%	19	18
Gabon	4 549	1%	+11%	18	19
Madagascar	4 282	1%	+4%	17	20
Inde	4 247	1%	+90%	32	21
Royaume-Uni	4 213	1%	+12%	23	22
Colombie	4 183	1%	+29%	25	23
Guinée	4 152	1%	+9%	22	24
Roumanie	4 093	1%	-10%	15	25
Total	343 386	100%	+19%	-	-

« CHOOSE FRANCE » : A GLOBAL STRATEGY



- Announced by the French Prime Minister in November 2018
- Objective : 500 000 international students in 2027
- Main actions :
 - Simplification of visa policies for student applicants
 - Seed funding for new teaching programs of French as a foreign language
 - Seed funding for new programs taught in English
 - Labels for quality of service provided to foreign students
 - Adjustment of tuition fees for international students to contribute to fund these improvements
 - Support to overseas campuses and academic programs outside France

AUTONOMY OF UNIVERSITIES : RATIONALE

- New law in 2007 on « Liberties and responsibilities of universities »
- Previous situation : Budget, HR, Real Estate... under direct control and management of the State
- approval *ex ante* of educational programmes by the Ministry
- Goals :
 - Promote innovation
 - Improve agility and adaptability to local environment and job market needs
 - Increase international competitiveness
- European frame : in 2007, invitation of the Council of the European Union to grant autonomy to universities)

AUTONOMY OF UNIVERSITIES : FEATURES

- Increased power of University Presidents and University Boards, (including representatives of faculty, staff and students, external members, representative of local governments...) in the research / teaching strategy , internal organisation, financial management...
- Management of the HR (and transfer of the corresponding budget from the State) by the universities themselves.
- Possibilities for universities to hire staff on contracts, to award bonuses, adjust teaching duties to allow more involvement in the management of projects , etc.
- Transfer of the real estate property to universities
- Possibility to contract loans
- Increasing the possibility for universities to decide on education and research policy, seek private funding (through Foundations), establish partnerships and alliances Ex ante (up to mergers)
- Increased responsibility, external performance evaluation based on scientific output, employment of alumni

AUTONOMY OF UNIVERSITIES : PROCESS

- 2007 : Law on « Liberties and responsibilities of universities » (*LRU*)
- 2009 : First batch of 20 « Liberties and responsibilities of universities »
- universities being granted the « Extended Responsibilities and Competencies » (*RCE*)
- 2013 : All universities obtain the Extended Responsibilities and Competencies
- 2013 : Some new adjustments in the Law on Higher Education and Research (ESR)

2019...



Frédérique Vidal

Intervention de Frédérique Vidal, Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

« Aujourd'hui, la seule voie qui s'ouvre pour relever les défis actuels est de franchir ensemble une nouvelle étape dans l'autonomie des universités, une autonomie à la fois plus profonde, plus courageuse et plus exigeante. »

AUTONOMY OF UNIVERSITIES : BOUNDARIES

- National Degrees are maintained
- Tuition fees for National Degrees are set by the State
- Levels and criteria for Social scholarships are also set by the State
- National regulations for statutory faculty positions
- Role of national commissions in the recruitment and career of faculty :
National Concil of Universities (*CNU*)
- National regulations on student enrollment

STUDENT CENTERDNESS IN EVALUATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS



■ Student centeredness belongs to the criteria of the evaluations performed by the quality assessment / accreditation agencies :

- [HCERES](#)
- [CTI](#) (for Engineering Education)

■ These criteria are in line with the [European Standards and Guidelines \(ESG\)](#)





THANK YOU!