The **Directorate of European and International Relations and Co-operation** ([DREIC - Direction des relations européennes et internationales et de la coopération](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice))

In France, the Directorate of European and International Relations and Co-operation - within the Department for National Education - contributes to opening up the French educational system to the world and developing the French language. It co-ordinates the development of exchanges and co-operation with foreign school, university and research systems. To this end it contributes to preparing bilateral agreements as well as elaborating projects done as part of the relevant European and international organisations. It contributes assistance to the general directorate for higher learning and vocational integration and to the general directorate for research and innovation to define the measures needed for the construction of the European space of higher learning and research. It prepares the Ministry’s positions and represents it in international bodies and at meetings, in particular in the European education committees.

**Bilateral Agreements**

Complementing the European and multilateral cooperation, the bilateral approach makes it possible to establish sustainable links between France and its main European partners.

**Bilateral initiatives and programmes in school education**

With regard to school education, significant partnerships have been established especially with Germany, the UK, Spain and Italy.

**Franco-German cooperation**

Franco-German co-operation in education is especially close and is characterised by various schemes.

The cornerstone of such close co-operation was founded on the Élysée Treaty signed on 22 January 1963 between France and the German Federal Republic by President de Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer. It gave rise to unique institutions such as the Franco-German Office for Youth (OFAJ), the High Franco-German Cultural Council, the ARTE television channel and the Franco-German University.

**The roadmap of 12 November 2007**

On 22 January 2003 at the fortieth anniversary commemoration ceremony of the Élysée Treaty, the importance of co-operation in education was re-confirmed. The two heads of State, used the occasion to charge the Ministers of Education of the two countries to come up with a "roadmap" asking them to take "all necessary steps to achieve substantive results" in educational matters. This roadmap is regularly updated. Each year the Franco-German experts on the Commission for general education
and the Commission for vocational education make an assessment of the implementation of the recommended measures.

1. Strategic objectives

These objectives are part of the priorities framework defined by the European Union in the language and educational fields (the Lisbon Process), i.e. language diversity and the compatibility of educational systems.

With knowledge of the partner's language being the cornerstone of productive co-operation between France and Germany, the primary goal is to promote learning the partner's language and supporting an educational model that enables young people from the two countries to have a good footing in two modern European languages as well as their mother tongue.

The roadmap stresses the need to encourage young people to consider France and Germany as a common space for their training and for exercising their future professions, which means a bigger effort to help mobility. Several measures to facilitate exchanges in education and vocational training have been proposed as well as initiatives to remove obstacles to pupil, trainee and workers' mobility.

2. Co-operation projects recommended by the 2007 roadmap

- Project 1: Promoting the learning of the partner's language. Early teaching of the partner's language should be encouraged
- Project 2: Developing decentralised co-operation. Regular meetings are organised between academy rectors and the education ministers of the Länder
- Project 3: Encouraging the mobility of professors. Exchanging teachers, particularly as part of their ongoing training, is strongly supported
- Project 4: Developing mobility in vocational training. Reinforced co-operation of the vocational training systems of the two countries is continuing. Pupil and apprentice exchanges and the elaboration of common skills repositories shall be encouraged
- Project 5: Co-operation in artistic and cultural education. An essential component in educating the young, artistic and cultural education contributes to the development of their knowledge, their skills, their sensitivity and their creativity. The two countries are encouraged to exchange good practices with a view to identifying real joint projects of co-operation in this field
- Project 6: Producing a Franco-German history textbook. After the 1st volume was published in the summer of 2006, the second appeared in the spring of 2008

Franco-British cooperation

Franco-British co-operation in education goes way back. It is periodically renewed by various conventions.

French is the most taught language in the United Kingdom, accounting for over 90% of foreign-language teaching. English is also the first language studied in France with over 8 million pupils studying it. The language policies of the two countries put their faith in the early learning of the other language. The ambition to include a European dimension into their educational programmes is shared with the building of a unified Europe being done not just through learning the partner's language but also through a better understanding or their history and culture.

Franco-Scottish co-operation follows along these same lines.

The preferred Franco-British avenues of co-operation are the following:

Training of teachers and managerial staff
pursue and develop the cross-training programme designed for primary education trainee teachers and extend this programme to secondary education teachers;
encourage cooperation in the training of managerial staff in collèges and lycées based on the theme of the steering of secondary education institutions.

School partnerships

pursue and promote partnerships, more specifically educational cooperation projects between schools, collèges and lycées, via pupil exchanges or by means of information and communication technologies, notably as part of the exchange programme between English schools and European sections in France and the eTwinning European programme;
promote practical work experience for pupils, teachers and heads of institutions with a view to developing innovative pedagogical projects.

Exchanges on themes of common interest

pursue exchanges of points of view and best practices as part of groups of experts. The themes are defined jointly and renewed every two years. The themes selected as a priority are:

- School-Family relationships,
- education in responsible behaviour: citizenship, nutritional education and food;
- decentralised cooperation,

pursue joint development of education programmes and certifications for vocational purposes, relative to the labour market, more specifically for 14 to 19 year-olds.

Franco-Spanish cooperation

The school context is favourable to Franco-Spanish cooperation, as Spanish and French are respectively the second most studied languages in France and in Spain. The minister of foreign and European affairs presented a Bill in September 2008 "authorising the approval of the framework agreement between the Government of the French Republic and the Government of the Kingdom of Spain regarding the educational, language and cultural systems in the school education institutions of both States". This agreement reinforces cooperation between both States in the sector of the education and teaching of French and Spanish languages. In particular, it provides a legal framework for the special systems implemented in both countries (notably French sections in the institutions of the Spanish autonomous communities and Spanish-language international sections in French institutions).

The main avenues of co-operation:

- organising ways of co-operating between academies and Spanish "autonomous" regions
- promoting the development of international Spanish language sections in France and bilingual systems in Spain
- dual attribution of the baccalauréat and the bachillerato ("Bachibac") to pupils having pursued a mixed education including two specific disciplines taught in the partner country’s language. The system was implemented at the start of the 2010 school year
- strengthening co-operation in vocational education by encouraging pupil, apprentice and teacher mobility and developing partnerships between educational institutions.

Franco-Italian cooperation

Franco-Italian bilateral co-operation in education is mainly about pupil mobility and teaching the
language of the partner country, especially as part of the European and international sections. Using common resources and exchanging experiences contribute to developing non-language disciplines in Italian and French.

The protocol signed on 17 July 2007 by the French and Italian education ministers formalised this cooperation on the four following major themes:

- educational partnerships and exchanges between bilingual sections in France and Italy
- ongoing training of teaching staff and school heads
- certification of the language of the partner country
- reflection on a bi-national examination for secondary end-of-studies

The last point took substantive form with the signature on 24 February 2009 of an agreement setting out the dual issuing of the baccalauréat and the Esame di stato to pupils of both countries having pursued integrated studies including two specific subjects taught in the language of the partner country. This accord is called the EsaBac and was implemented at the start of the 2010 school year.

**Cooperation at Higher Education level**

The Ministry of Higher Learning and Research (MESR), as part of the contractual policy that governs the relations between the State and autonomous public institutions, invited the public higher learning and research institutions to take part in building a European space of higher learning and research, confirm their international dimension in research and doctoral training and strengthen their presence on the international scene. The public institutions of higher learning conduct international co-operation policies as part of their autonomy and by adhering to the rules that govern France's external relations. International co-operation is one of the missions of higher learning for public services as re-confirmed by the law of 10 August 2007 relating to the freedoms and responsibilities of the universities.

International visibility of institutions is a major challenge for doctoral research and training activities that are becoming more and more internationalised and the quality of which is growing at his level. The offer of doctoral training must strive to be clear and attractive, i.e. the international co-supervision of theses is a structuring tool for co-operation between French and foreign research laboratories, and the policy of welcoming foreign doctoral candidates must be worthy of attracting the best students in the best possible conditions.

So as to strengthen their presence on the international scene, higher learning institutions are urged to do the following:

- attract and recruit foreign instructors
- increase the flow of the institution's students abroad with the implementation of an information policy about the training on offer, a genuine welcoming and mentoring set-up for students, teachers and teacher-researchers, the creation of specific training courses and a policy of specific languages
- seek greater consistency in the structures, guidance and co-operation of the international activities defined and conducted by the various components of the institution so as to implement integrated transnational partnerships involving training and research
- promote a site initiative for the benefit of better international clarity based on shared specifications between the different institutions and relying on partnerships with local authorities. The pôles de recherche et d’enseignement supérieur (PRES, research and higher learning centres) contribute to this greater visibility.
Partners

Three exchange and partnership areas can be identified:

- exchanges with scientifically and technologically advanced countries aim at developing mobility programmes in their various forms and the building of structured partnerships involving training and research. For example, the participation of French institutions in the Erasmus Mundus programme
- exchanges with emerging countries (Asia, Latin America) bears on the promotion of the French training offer with a view to attracting a greater number of students from these regions and on joint training and research programmes
- about the developing countries, besides the countries in the "priority solidarity zone" where French institutions intercede with a rationale of aid and assistance, co-operation activities are oriented towards countries, the demand for expertise in training and research of which are subject of funding after major international calls for tender.

International co-operation tools put at MESR’s disposal

There are many ministerial incentive programmes and instruments for international co-operation in higher learning. They have been designed in connection with operations carried out by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE) that focus on several objectives:

- Promoting the emergence of institutionalised co-operation frameworks
- Supporting university- engineering school- and technical university institute-based initiatives
- Encouraging partnerships and exchanges between French and international universities and research institutes

Other incentive activities are mainly implemented by the direction des relations européennes, internationales et de la coopération (DREIC, Directorate of European, International and Co-operation Relations).

The main incentive programmes for co-operation in higher learning

Joint doctoral training

Joint doctoral education (co-supervision of theses) and diplomas in international partnership, most especially with the universities of a few European countries, intend to promote high-level bilateral training that is highly integrated and involves student mobility. The selected bi-national projects receive financial support from France (MESR and MAEE, usually at parity) and the partner country either through bi-national institutions such as the Franco-German University and the Franco-Italian University, or through the Ministry of Higher Learning and Research and its foreign counterpart, after calls for candidacies and assessment. Germany, Austria, Spain, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Ukraine are the member-countries of this programme, and it is about to be launched in Turkey. This determination to encourage quality European mobility also leads the MESR and/or representative conferences to draw up conventions facilitating the mutual recognition of diplomas between European countries which are ready to do so (Germany, Austria, Spain, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland and the Czech Republic).

University networks between France and partner countries (in connection with the MAEE co-operation programmes)

Stronger co-operation with institutional networks enable the extension of partnerships (COFECUB programme in Brazil, ECOS Nord programmes with Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela and ECOS Sud
with Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, Paul Porras Barrenechea Network with Peru, university training in Algeria, the creation of a Franco-Indian university consortium, etc.)

The goal of strengthening university co-operation in North America is especially seen by participation in the Franco-Canadian Funds for research, by a renewal of university co-operation with Quebec (the creation of the Franco-Quebec Council for University Co-operation), by the increasing support for the Franco-American university and cultural exchanges Commission and by the joint secondary-school teacher-training programme.

Training engineers "French fashion"

The BRAFITEC programme in Latin America gives rise to cross training between Brazilian and French pupils and engineers. The model has been extended to Mexico (MEXFITEC), Argentina (ARFITEC) and Chile (CHILFITEC).

The Minister of Higher Learning and Research is helping in Asia with the start-up of engineer training:

- By creating institutional "antennae" abroad, i.e. École Centrale in Beijing; École d'Ingénieurs Aéronautiques in Tianjin; Université de Technologie in Shanghai (leveraged by the U.T. network), Franco-Chinese Institute of Nuclear Energy at the University Sun Yat Sen in Canton
- Through co-operation between French and international consortiums of institutions via, for example, the programme de formation d’ingénieurs d’excellence au Vietnam (P.F.I.E.V.–programme of excellence for engineer training in Vietnam).
- Note: aid to the establishment of an elite scientific university in India (IIT-Rajasthan) in 2008, also a sciences and technology university in Hanoi in 2009 (U.S.T.H.).

Professionalised university training

Through subsidies, the Ministry of Higher Learning and Research contributes to the international activities of technical university institutes that develop partnerships in different countries, more particularly with China, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela.
Their activities are characterised by welcoming students from these countries as part of specific programmes leading to more structured engineering partnerships between short-term professionalizing higher-learning systems.

Cooperation and Participation in Worldwide Programme and Organisation

This section endeavours to present an overview regarding France’s participation in four major multilateral organisations, with authority in the sectors of education, higher education and research: the OECD, UNESCO, European Union and Council of Europe. The ministries for national Education, higher Education and Research co-operate with these institutions on the following issues: update and communication of the work carried out, advisors’ representation and appointment, participation in the definition of the programmes and finally the co-funding of priority projects.

France is also involved in co-operation with Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF–International Organization of Francophobia).

Cooperation with the OECD

In the educational sector, France is an active partner of the OECD. The OECD's mission is to help countries to implement policies and practices to improve the quality, equity and effectiveness of their
educational systems. It constitutes an expertise reference centre that publishes indicators and carries out internal comparative and prospective studies. It makes recommendations to governments on educational policy.

The ministry of national Education is particularly involved in the following international comparison activities:

- Programme for international student assessment – PISA;
- Education indicators INES;
- Teaching and Learning International Survey – TALIS.

- Pathways for disabled persons toward higher learning and employment: France took part in this OECD study. The draft comparative report was presented in Paris in June 2010
- Education and reception of small children: the initial comparative report of countries participating in this activity, including France, was presented at an international conference in 2006. The work is ongoing.
- How to end educational failure: effective steps: this international comparative activity is part of the continuity of work conducted in 2006-2007. France takes part.

**Cooperation with UNESCO**

The ministry collaborates with UNESCO on Education for all and provides French expertise during the major Unesco meetings on educational and scientific issues.

**Actions of the ministry of National Education, Youth and Associative Life**

The Ministry contributes French expertise at major UNESCO meetings for education and science. Its role is the following:

- Help establish France’s positions, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Support UNESCO’s educational and scientific action;
- Support the international Institute for educational planning (IIEP);
- Participate in the operation of the French Commission for UNESCO. This commission involves the participation of institutions, experts and civil society in UNESCO missions;
- Support the projects of the French Commission for UNESCO.

**Partnerships between UNESCO and the ministry**

a. French national commission for UNESCO (C.N.F.U.)

The C.N.F.U. constitutes an interface between public authorities, the intellectual community and UNESCO. It brings together personalities, experts, voluntary representatives from institutions and civil society. It is under the authority of the ministries in charge of foreign Affairs, Culture, ecology, higher Education and Research, Education. This commission has three principal duties:

- promote France’s intellectual influence at UNESCO;
- promote UNESCO’s influence in French society;
- form and implement international cooperation in UNESCO’s areas of expertise, in accordance with France’s priorities.

**Network of schools associated with UNESCO**

This network involves 8500 institutions worldwide. UNESCO gives a label to these institutions because they commit to:

- promoting the organisation’s key themes;
- developing school projects and exchanges;
- participating in international meetings.
The French network is coordinated by the French Commission for UNESCO.

**International Institute for educational planning (IIEP)**

Located in Paris, the International Institute for educational planning (IIEP) is a UNESCO training and research centre specialising in the management and planning of education systems. Since its creation in 1963, the IIEP has trained nearly 6,000 senior education executives from 160 countries in French and English.

**The UNESCO clubs**

The UNESCO clubs promote education for peace and citizenship in an associative framework in schools and education institutions. The French Federation of the UNESCO clubs is accredited as a complementary association for public instruction.

**Cooperation with the European Union**

France actively participates in the "Programme for life-long education and training ". The agency that runs this programme at a nation-wide level is located in Bordeaux and is the Europe-Education-Formation France agency. It is composed of the Ministries of National Education, Higher Learning and Research, Vocational Training, Employment, Agriculture and Foreign Affairs. It also includes players from the education and vocational training spheres. The agency's role is to inform and advise educational institutions and training and guidance institutions.

- It grants community subsidies for nationally run programmes
- It monitors the development of activities from an administrative and financial point of view
- It participates in assessing programmes
- It provides general guidance as well as sets priority activities

Although it is jointly funded by the European Commission and the State, its activities are almost exclusively funded by the European Commission.

**Education and training 2020**

France also participates in working out benchmarks as part of European strategy for co-operation in the fields of education and training ("Education and Training 2020").

**Cooperation with the Council of Europe**

France is particularly involved in the educational actions of the Council of Europe, i.e.:

**a. Intercultural education**

The "Policies and practices of education in the socio-cultural diversity" project sums up the situation of the initial training of teachers and introducing European references in managing educational diversity. A white paper on intercultural dialogue, published by the Council of Europe, came out in May 2008.

**b. Education for democratic citizenship**

The present work by the Council of Europe concerning democratic citizenship focuses on three avenues:

- democratic governance in schools
- training teachers
- life-long learning
- Brainstorming is underway with the European Commission on developing indicators for active
citizenship.

c. Language policies
This programme contains six avenues:
- Common European reference framework for languages (CECRL)
- Language education
- Studies on the profiles of national languages policies
- European languages portfolio, a tool used as part of the European Commission's Europass
- Language policies for migrant adults
- Co-operation with the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)

d. The Pestalozzi programme
The Pestalozzi programme trains education professionals (teachers, school heads, inspectors, educational councillors, teacher educators). It organises some fifty workshops lasting from 3 to 5 days, which occur every year in the Member States of the Council of Europe on the Organisation's priority programme-related themes.

Co-operation promoted by the International Organisation of Francophonia

French is spoken by 182 million people on the five continents. Based on this shared language, the French-speaking movement created an "International Organization of Francophonía (OIF)", located in Paris and includes 75 of the world's countries. France is the main donor to francophonia, meeting 70% to 80% of its costs.

The Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Higher Learning and Research support francophonia in education. These ministries support it in three ways:

- financially
- guidance: the ministries take part in defining the objectives of French-speaking institutions that are active in the fields of education and research
- expertise: a considerable part of the francophonia-mobilised staff is drawn from these ministries

At present the OIF's four major objectives are the following:

- promoting French and cultural and language diversity
- promoting peace, democracy and human rights
- supporting education, training, higher learning and research
- developing co-operation for sustainable development and solidarity

Education and training programming is part of its mission for "supporting education, training, higher learning and research". It is structured around two avenues:

- contributing to the international effort to enable States and government to ensure access for all children to a full primary studies cycle by eliminating disparities between the genders. This is an objective figuring in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals
- promoting teaching, training and research for development and employment

Other players in francophonia

The following bodies and associations, linked to the OIF, contribute to co-operation policies in education between French-speaking countries:

Association internationale des maires francophones (AIMF—International Association of...
French-speaking Mayors
Created in 1979, the AIMF is an associational network of 225 entirely or partially French-speaking cities in 49 countries. It is an operator for francophonia and is headquartered in Paris. The association develops the capacities for running local communities. Concerning education, the AIMF carries out activities for training municipal staff, school leaders, teacher training colleges and educational institutions.

La Conférence des ministres de l'éducation des pays ayant le français en partage (Confemen-The Education Ministers' Conference of Countries Sharing French)
The Education Ministers' Conference of Countries Sharing French is the consultational and liaison body for 44 French-speaking education ministers. It is headquartered in Dakar and has three principle missions:

- promoting the French-speaking point of view in international bodies participating in the follow-up of the Dakar World Forum on Education for All
- creating the conditions for eligibility of French-speaking educational systems to international funding
- guiding the programming of OIF's "education, training, youth" wing

Fédération internationale des professeurs de français (FIPF-International Federation of French-language Teachers)
The FIPF includes over 186 associations of French-language teachers in 140 countries. It was established in 1961 and is headquartered in Sèvres, France. Its goal is to disseminate the French language and francophonia with particular concern for multi-lingualism and the worldwide pooling of knowledge and skills.

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