

# FRANCE'S IMAGE AND APPEAL IN THE EYES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2017 CAMPUS FRANCE  
KANTAR SOFRES POLL

# INTRODUCTION

## Context of the study

For the third time in six years, Campus France commissioned Kantar Sofres to conduct a quantitative study to determine “the image and appeal of France” in the eyes of the international students who come to France to study at the postsecondary level.

Like the previous surveys in 2011 and 2013, the 2017 poll covers questions about students’ decision processes, their level of satisfaction with their stay, and the benefits of the experience. Questions were added in 2017 to assess the impact of Britain’s vote to withdraw from the European Union, the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States, and the election of Emmanuel Macron in France. For the first time, students’ level of awareness of and interest in France Alumni were also measured.

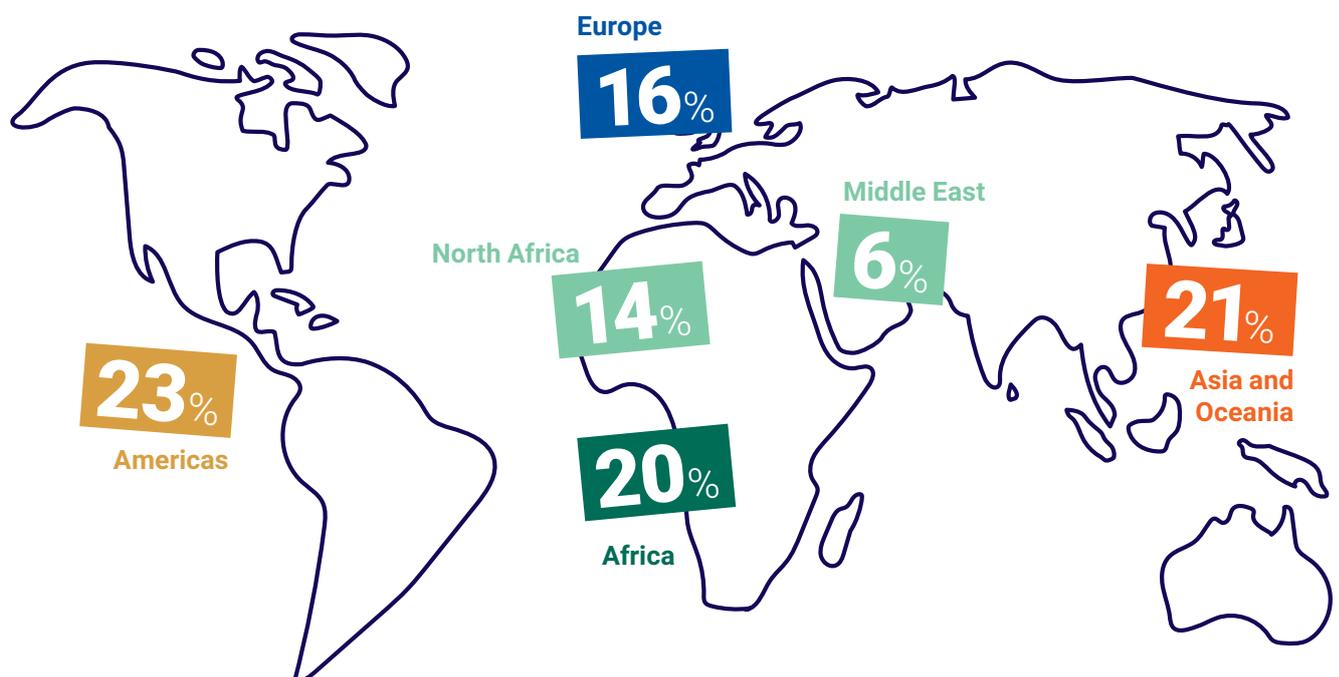
The sampled students are separated into three groups: those preparing to come to France (cohort 1), those already in France (cohort 2), and those who have completed their study period (cohort 3).

## Survey methodology – Take 3

The survey was administered online between July 10 and October 26, 2017, to a sample of 14,245 international students, of whom 2,528 were preparing to come to France imminently to begin their studies (cohort 1); 4,876 were already studying in France (cohort 2); and 6,841 had completed a period of study in France (cohort 3). The questionnaire was made available in four languages: French, English, Spanish, and Chinese. Links to the survey were disseminated by Campus France with assistance from French institutions of higher education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition to email distribution, the links appeared in notices posted on various websites and in postings on social networks.

The complete results are available on the Campus France website under the following tab: *Ressources documentaires > Publications et Études*.

### > Geographic distribution of survey respondents.



# HIGHLIGHTS

Major trends of the Campus France Kantar Sofres 2017 poll compared with the 2011 and 2013 polls

## Very good results: Students' views of France and French higher education have held steady and even improved

**9 out of 10 international students would recommend France as a study destination** (90% in 2011; 91% in 2013; 92% in 2017).

**9 out of 10 international students are satisfied with their stay in France** (91% in 2011; 90% in 2013; 93% in 2017) – 52% completely so (43% in 2011; 41% in 2013).

**9 out of 10 students expressed their satisfaction with the value of their degrees** (90% in 2017 vs. 88% in 2011 and 2013) and the quality of the education they received (88% in 2017 vs. 85% in 2011 and 86% in 2013).

**9 out of 10 students affirm the cultural and touristic appeal of France** (92% and 91%, respectively, in 2017 vs. 92% and 90% in 2011 and 88% and 90% in 2013).

**8 out of 10 students have a good perception of academic support in France** (81% in 2017 vs. 75% in 2013) and reported regular contact with instructors (78% vs. 73% in 2013).

France is perceived as having:

- **major cultural and artistic influence** (94% vs 90% in 2011; 91% in 2013),
- **great intellectual and scientific value** (90% vs 87% in 2011; 88% in 2013)
- **a rich history** (90% vs 87% in 2011; 88% in 2013).
- Even students' perceptions of France's economy improved in 2017, recovering their 2011 level: 76% of the students sampled believe that France has a **strong and stable economy** (78% in 2011; 64% in 2013).

## Compared with some other major host countries and countries of origin, France has increased her appeal

- **France has greater appeal than before for 64% of international students sampled, ahead of Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom.** Only Canada has increased its appeal more (69%).
- Among other major destination countries for international students, the United States retains its appeal, but **the election of Donald Trump has had a negative effect.** Similarly, **Brexit has reduced Britain's** appeal in the eyes of students responding to the survey.

## Concerns remain, but their weight has diminished

The major concerns expressed by cohorts 2 and 3 were:

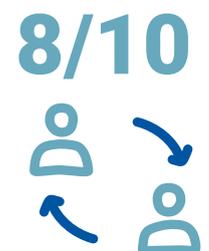
- **the cost of living** (39% dissatisfied vs. 53% in 2011 and 47% in 2013);
- **administrative requirements** (46% dissatisfied vs. 53% in 2011 and 52% in 2013);
- **the cost of housing** (44% dissatisfied vs. 53% in 2011; 52% in 2013);
- **opportunities to work in France after graduation** (42% dissatisfied vs. 52% in 2013).



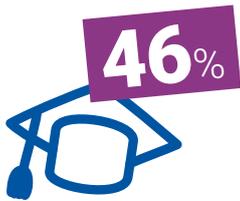
**9 out of 10 international students would recommend France as a study destination**



**are satisfied with the quality of education**



**8 out of 10 students have a favorable perception of academic support structures**



The quality of education is the top reason students cite for choosing France



FRENCH



83% of international students express interest in the France Alumni network

## However, changes can be seen in the competitive context, in the selection criteria applied by students, and in their curriculum choices

The dimension of personal experience is now a dominant factor in decisions to pursue study abroad.

The students sampled seek to study abroad for the following reasons:

- to have an enriching personal experience: 38% (35% in 2011; 32% in 2013);
- to gain international experience: 37% (37% in 2011; 34% in 2013);
- to earn an internationally recognized credential: 35% (39% in 2011; 37% in 2013).

**Competition continues to intensify:** 47% of the students who chose France report having hesitated between France and another country (40% in 2011; 45% in 2013).

- The countries that most tempted the students who ultimately chose France were Canada and the United Kingdom, followed by the United States and Germany.
- Among those who considered other countries before choosing France, **77% identified France as their first choice.**

Quality of education remains the top reason for choosing France, though French culture and gaining proficiency in French are gaining in importance. Institutional reputation is also gaining and now outweighs the value of the degree earned.

**Students' top reasons for choosing France:**

- quality of education: 46% (45% in 2011; 51% in 2013);
- gaining proficiency in French: 41% (37% in 2011; 42% in 2013);
- France's cultural appeal: 38% (31% in 2011; 35% in 2013);
- the reputation of institutions and faculty members: 34% (31% in 2011; 37% in 2013);
- the value of degrees: 32% (33% in 2011; 35% in 2013).

32% of the 2017 respondents reported going to at least two countries (other than their own) in the course of their study abroad (226% of respondents in 2011, 30% in 2013). The most frequently cited countries were the United States (28%), Germany and Canada (both 23%), and the United Kingdom (22%).

## France has an edge among international students who are French speakers

On the other hand, French proficiency increases by the end of the study period, even though 9 out of 10 students also speak English.

- Before arriving in France, 84% of international students had at least a good command of French (83% in 2011 and 2013);
- Upon completing their studies, 57% of non-French-speakers reported speaking fluent French (48% in 2013; 55% in 2013);
- 94% of students had at least a good command of English (new question in 2017).

## Room for improvement

Although the France Alumni network was known to only 39% of the students sampled, it aroused strong interest: 83% of survey respondents affirmed their interest in this type of network, including 50% expressing intense interest.

The network aims to sustain contacts with France after students have graduated and returned home. The desire of many students to gain initial work experience in France upon completion of their studies is satisfied for just 1 in 4 students.

- 67% of those working outside France report having at least occasional contact with France in connection with their professional activity (59% in 2011; 65% in 2013).
- More than 8 in 10 students wish to follow their studies with an initial working experience in France (84% in 2017 vs. 80% in 2011 and 84% in 2013); **but only 22% did so according to the 2017 survey** (vs. 26% in 2011 and 23% in 2013).

1. The results of the 2011 and 2013 surveys are available on the Campus France website under the tab labeled "ressources documentaires."

# FRANCE: AN INCREASINGLY APPEALING DESTINATION

## A study destination that is already appealing and becoming more so

### > Students: the best ambassadors

France exerts a strong pull: 9 in 10 respondents (92%) would recommend study in France.

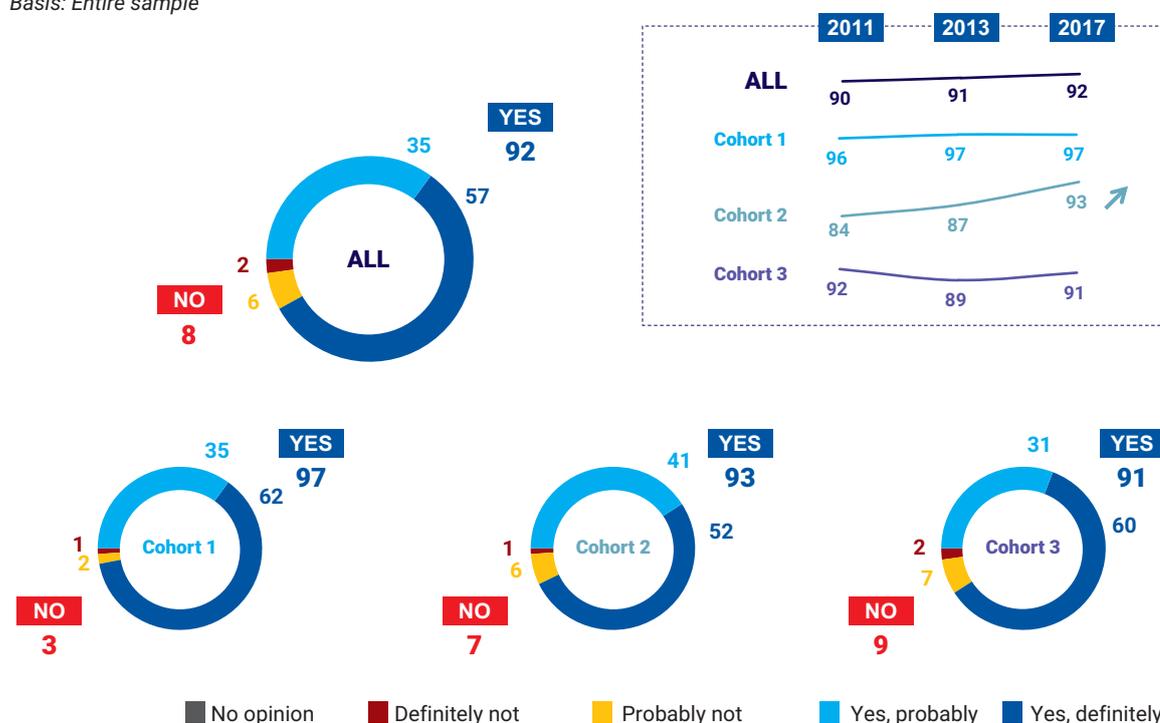
The level of endorsement, already quite high, is even higher among respondents presently in France (93%, up 6 points from 2013).



64% of respondents believe France has become a more attractive destination

**QUESTION:** Would you recommend France as a study destination for your friends and acquaintances?

Basis: Entire sample



### > France's appeal is growing

When compared with trends in the attractiveness of other large host countries (or countries of origin) in the eyes of international students, France's evolution has been quite positive. **France is considered by the sample as having become more attractive over time by nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents**, placing it ahead of Germany (which 51% see as having become more attractive), the United States (48%), the United Kingdom (45%), Australia (42%), China (31%), and Russia (14%). Only Canada's improvement over time is judged by the sample to be better than France's: 69% of respondents feel that Canada has become more attractive in recent years.

**Students planning to study in France** (cohort 1) tend even more to feel that France has become a more attractive destination for international students than it was several years ago – 78% of them express this feeling, compared with 61% of students already in France and 60% who have completed their stay in the country.

### > A perception that varies by region of origin

**The results vary with respondents' region of origin.** Students from some parts of the world are more positive about the evolution of France's appeal, particularly those from South America (75%), the Middle East (72%), non-EU Europe (71%), and Asia (67%). In other regions the results are less marked (EU: 55%; North America: 54%), but even there more than half of respondents believe that France has gained in appeal.



## Cultural influence is the top reason given for France's recent gain in appeal

### > Culture – a strong suit for France

For respondents, **France's reputation for culture** turns out to be the chief reason behind its increased appeal in recent years (78% of mentions). Economic and political considerations appear to be secondary in respondents' eyes: 33% mentioned the country's current **economic situation**; 31%, **the political situation** and the current government; 29%, safety and security; 29%, the cost of living; and 24%, the country's visa policies.

Compared with the other countries polled, **Canada scored high in several areas** – among them culture, although not as highly as France (59% vs. 78%). The economic situation was much more often mentioned in connection with the United States (61%) and the United Kingdom (46%) than for France (33%), but their score on cultural influence lagged France's (58% for the United States and 67% for the United Kingdom).

### Top reasons given for the increased appeal of each of four countries (in % of mentions among those who answered)

	France	United Kingdom	United States	Canada
Cultural influence	78%	67%	58%	59%
Economic situation	33%	46%	61%	60%
Political situation; current government	31%	27%	21%	53%
Safety and security	29%	26%	24%	54%
Cost of living	29%	11%	22%	31%
Visa policy	24%	13%	18%	42%

### > The cost of living and visa policy: brakes on France's appeal

Conversely, among those who felt that France had lost some of its appeal in recent years (15% of students questioned), the cost of living and visa policy were the top reasons cited (both being mentioned by 47% of respondents), followed by safety and security (37%) and the economy (32%). Still further down on the list of negative reasons were the political situation (mentioned by 23%) and the country's cultural profile (22%).

### > The impact of the political situation in the United States and United Kingdom

**Political developments appear to have played a part in the eroding appeal of some countries, notably United States following the election of Donald Trump.** Among students who feel that the United States has become a less attractive destination, 76% cite the political situation and current government as a reason. Brexit is similarly prominent among students who believe that the United Kingdom has lost appeal: 54% of respondents who feel that way cite politics and the current government as one of their reasons.

## Overall, France still enjoys a favorable image

### > France: culture, history, and diplomacy

France's positive image among international students is sustained first and foremost by its reputation as a bastion of art and culture (94% positive evaluations), followed by its eminent history and intellectual and scientific reputation (both of which gather 90% positive assessments). Third in line is the perceived importance of its role in international diplomacy (83%).

### > Good marks for the French economy

Three-fourths of the students sampled (76%) now believe that France has a stable and efficient economy, up 12 percentage points from 2013.



**QUESTION:** Do the following statements accord with your present view of France?

Basis: Entire sample

	In %	ALL	GEOGRAPHIC REGION
France exerts substantial <b>cultural and artistic influence</b>		<b>94</b>	North America: <b>99%</b>
France has a <b>prestigious history</b>		<b>90</b>	North America: <b>97%</b> Asia/Oceania: <b>96%</b> South America: <b>95%</b>
France exerts substantial <b>intellectual and scientific influence</b>		<b>90</b>	
France plays an <b>important role in diplomacy</b>		<b>83</b>	Central America: <b>92%</b> North America: <b>90%</b> South America: <b>89%</b>
France has a <b>stable and efficient economy</b>		<b>76</b>	Central America: <b>92%</b> South America: <b>85%</b> North America: <b>84%</b>

**The possibility of working in France after graduation still seems complicated for respondents**

**> Access to employment: a brake...**

Even though students' perceptions of France's economy have greatly improved since 2013, **48% of international students find it difficult to remain in France to work after receiving their degree**. Students who have completed their stay in France emphasize this difficulty even more strongly (53%).

**> ... but less so than before**

Nevertheless, not as many students feel this way now as in 2013, when the rate was 58% – 10 percentage points more than in 2017.

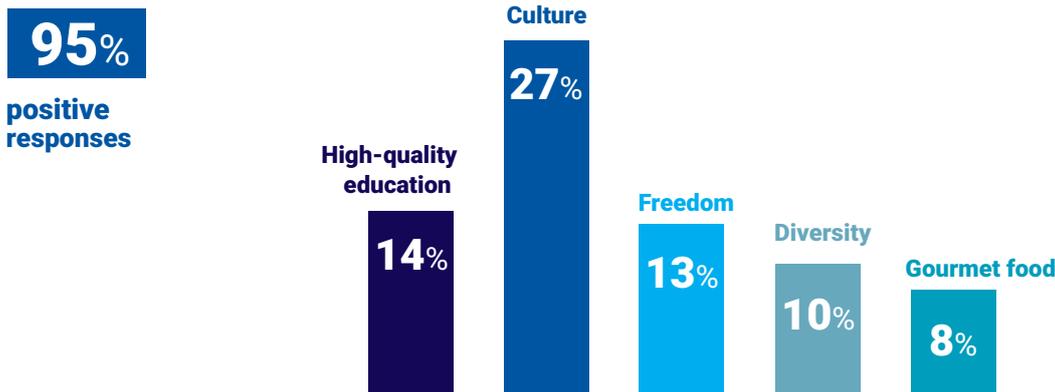
**48%**

**of respondents find it difficult to remain in France to work after completing their studies**

**QUESTION:** What 2 or 3 words best express your image of France? (Open question; free-form responses)

Basis: Entire sample

Top results – responses given by at least 2% of all respondents  
Also see page 19



# THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IS THE TOP CRITERION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND THE TOP REASON THEY CHOOSE FRANCE

## Studying abroad to have an enriching experience

### > An investment in personal growth

The students sampled chose to study abroad to have an **enriching personal experience** (38%, up 6 points from 2013), **to gain international experience** (37%, up 3 points), or to earn an **internationally recognized degree** (35%, down 2 points).

### > The path to better education and perhaps a job

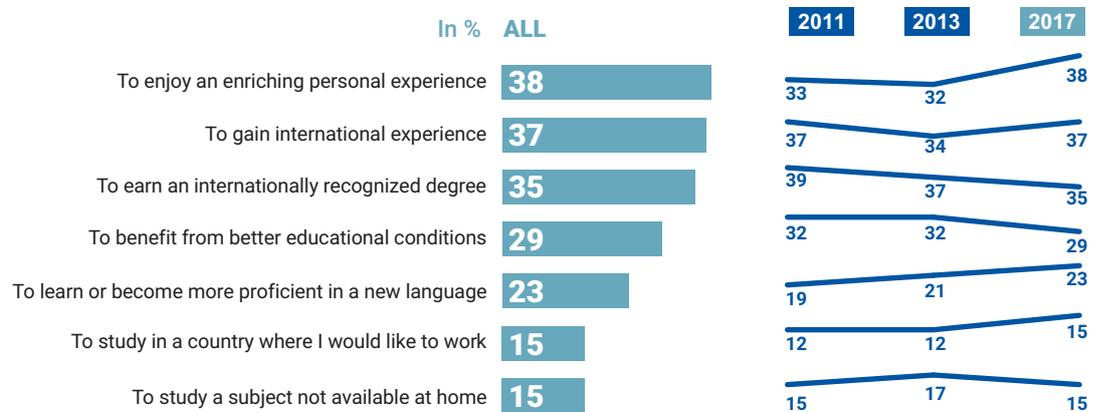
Other frequently mentioned motivations were to study under **better educational conditions** (29%) – a motivation particularly prevalent among incoming students (35%), to learn or become more **proficient in another language** (23%), **to find work in the target country** (15%), or to **study in a discipline not offered at home** (15%).

**QUESTION:** What are your two main reasons for wanting to study in a country other than your own?

Basis: Entire sample

+6%

Personal experience: an increasingly common motivator



The quality of education: the leading factor in students' choices

## The educational system is an important consideration when choosing a study destination

### > The leading factor: quality education

Among the criteria for choosing a destination for study abroad, reasons related to the educational system continue to predominate, which is not surprising. Indeed, **the quality of French higher education** is mentioned by 62% of respondents and remains **the top criterion of students** who decide to study abroad.

### > The major role of everyday life

Next in line are **the cost of living and of education** (44%), **the availability of a program** that matches the student's career plans (41%), and **the quality of life** and receptivity to foreigners (40%). **The possibility of staying on to work after graduation**, the availability of a **grant or scholarship**, and **living conditions** also loom large (mentioned respectively by 34%, 31% and 30% of respondents).

## The quality of education is also students' most-cited reason for choosing France

### > Recognized quality

Students' choice of France remains determined above all by the quality of education, though this factor (cited by 46% of respondents) was down 5 points from the 2013 poll.

### > The French language and France's global reputation

Next on the ladder of factors are being able to study in French (41%), France's cultural appeal (38%), the reputation of its educational institutions and faculty (34%), the value of degrees (32%), and the desire to learn French (30%).

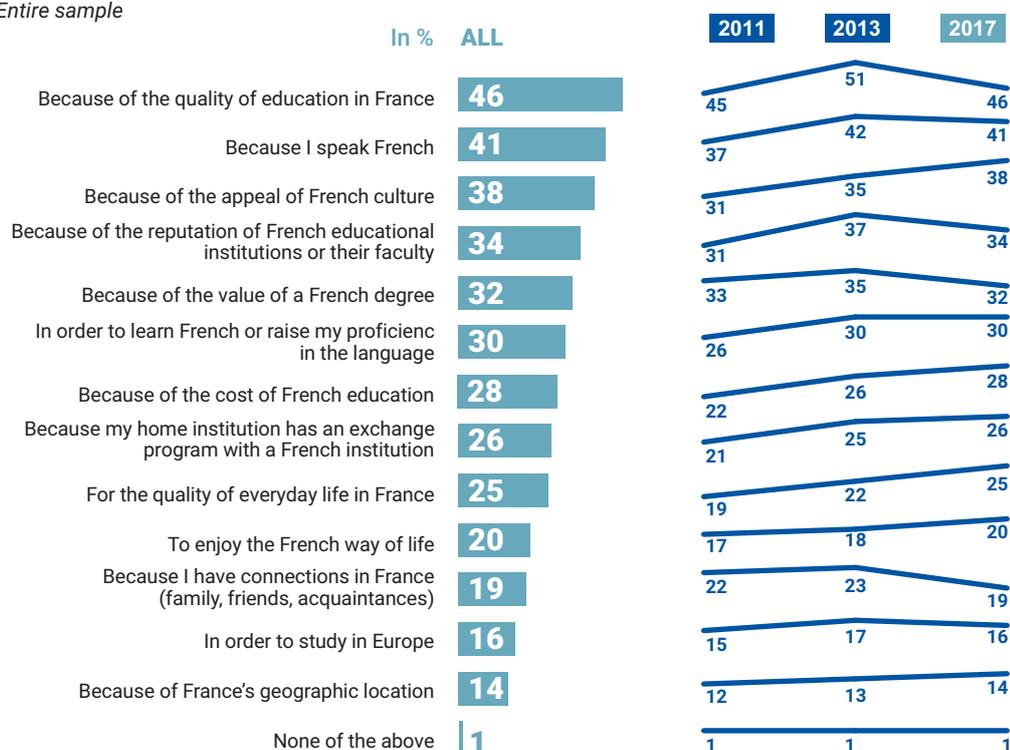
The last item scores highest, of course, among students who do not already speak French (36%), particularly among those who declared that they had a fair command of French before coming to France to study (52%), but also among those who knew little or no French (47%).

### > Paying for one's education

More than a quarter (28%) of students cited the (low) cost of French education as a strong factor in their decision to study in France. Incoming students mentioned this factor more this year than in 2013 (29% vs. 23%).

## QUESTION: Why did you choose France instead of another country for your studies?

Basis: Entire sample



## Half of respondents might have chosen another destination

### > A choice embraced

Nearly half (47%) of respondents hesitated between France and at least one other country as their study destination, but for three-fourths (77%) of the sample, France was their first choice (83% among students preparing to come to France).

### > Competition from the English-speaking world

Among the countries most frequently considered, Canada and the United Kingdom occupied first place (both mentioned by 39%), followed by the United States (33%) and Germany (29%). Other contenders were Belgium (14%), Switzerland (13%), Australia (12%), and Spain (11%).

Overall, although Canada and the United Kingdom maintained levels comparable to those they held in 2013, the proportion of students who considered the United States as an alternative to France dipped sharply (–8 points, a drop probably related to the election of Donald Trump, as touched on above). Belgium (14% in 2017) suffered a similar decline (from 22% in 2013).

### > The marked impact of language and cost

The two chief reasons for hesitation turn out to be the language of the host country – cited with particular frequency by students who also considered Spain (59%) and Germany (54%) – and the costs of living and of education – particularly among students who also considered Switzerland (46%), the United Kingdom (43%), and the United States (42%). The quality of the educational system also weighed heavily among reasons for hesitation, being mentioned spontaneously by 27% of international students. Other reasons that were volunteered, but with lesser frequency, were the cultural appeal of the country considered (17%) and ease of adjustment (attitude toward foreigners, visa policy, and so on) (15%).

### > Programs that involve more than one country

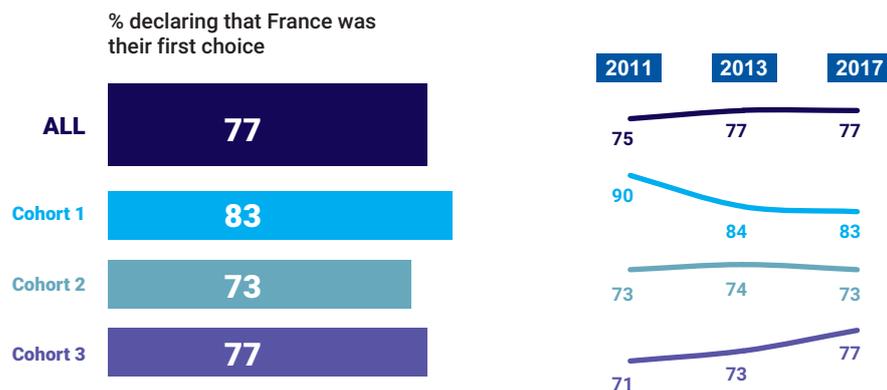
It is notable that more and more postsecondary programs involve more than one country, testifying to the growing importance of the international dimension in higher education (26% in 2011, 30% in 2013, and 32% in 2017). Among the other countries mentioned by the sample are those most frequently considered by students as alternatives to France, namely the United States (28%), Germany (23%), Canada (23%), and the United Kingdom (22%).



For 77% of respondents, France was the first choice for study abroad

## QUESTION: Would you say that France was your first choice for study abroad?

Basis: Respondents who reported considering another country (N = 6,656)



## Major preoccupations before arriving in France: succeeding academically and finding housing

Students' chief concerns before leaving for France are academic success (59%) and housing (57%). Next on the list are getting a visa (46%) – a source of worry particularly for cohort 1 (53%), improving their French (41%), registering at their educational institution (40%),

making a budget (39%), fitting in and making friends (37%), obtaining financial aid (29%), and locating a student job (29%). Awareness of tourist opportunities was not a major concern, being mentioned by only 9% of students.

# FRUITFUL STAYS - EVEN IF THEY DID NOT ALWAYS LEAD TO THE HOPED-FOR WORK EXPERIENCE IN FRANCE

## High overall satisfaction with respect to time spent in France

93% of the sampled students now studying or having recently completed studies in France report being satisfied "overall" with their stay (including 52% "completely"). **This score is up 3 percentage points from 2013** (and the share of those "completely" satisfied rose 11 points).

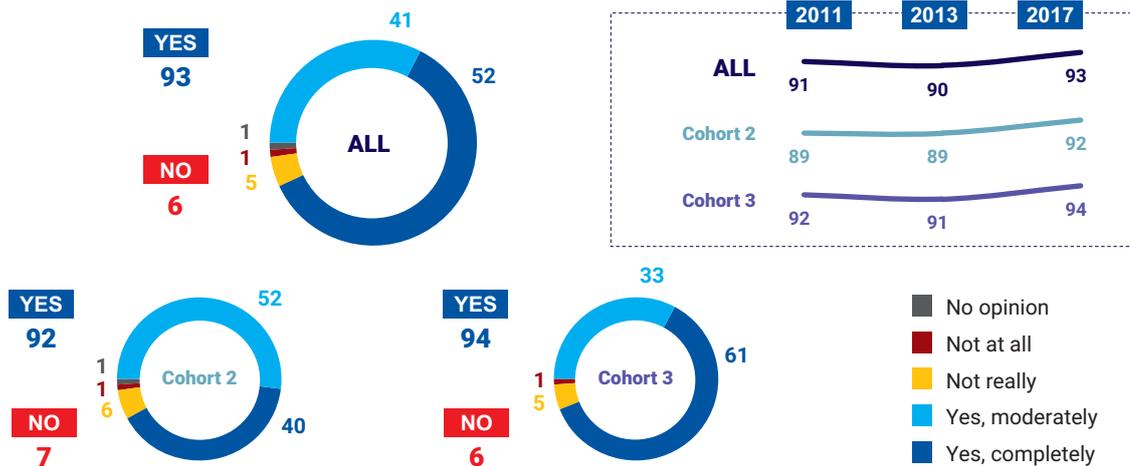
Viewed by major countries of origin, the satisfaction rate is also significantly higher among students from the United States (95%; 62% "completely"), India (94%; 63% "completely"), and Russia (98%; 64% "completely").



### QUESTION: Overall, are you / were you satisfied with your stay in France?

Basis: All respondents in cohorts 2 and 3 (N = 11,717 in cohort 2 and 6,841 in cohort 3)

Change from 2013



## Greater ease in adjusting to France

### > A proper welcome

Respondents report satisfaction with the welcome they received at their educational institution (88% satisfied) and in France in general (87%) – an area where satisfaction clearly improved with respect to 2013 (up 5 points) – but they have more reservations about the reception they got from French students (75% satisfied), though this measure, too, has improved since the last survey (by 4 points).

### > More individual support

Overall, students believe they obtained satisfactory academic support (81%), a dimension showing clear

improvement over 2013 (up 6 points). 78% report having had regular contacts with faculty (up 5 points), and 75% say they obtained the assistance they needed on matters related to living conditions during their stay (up 5 points).

### > In 3 cases out of 4, successful adjustment

Almost three-quarters of students found adjusting to life in France to be easy (72%), a figure that has risen regularly since the first survey (60% in 2011 and 67% in 2013). Yet more than a fourth of all students describe their adjustment as "difficult."



South American students report more adjustment problems than other groups (with 36% saying that adjustment was difficult), though those from Asia and Oceania are close (34%).

68% of respondents say they had opportunities to make French friends in the course of their stay, a level

comparable to that of 2013 (down 1 point). They were more likely to make friends with other foreigners, however (82%).

**Four of 10 respondents built a social life by joining a special-interest club or group** (41% in 2017; 40% in 2013).

## Satisfaction with study in France is buoyed by the educational system, cultural opportunities, and the quality of life

### > The quality of education is recognized and appreciated

**The educational system delivers: the value of degrees** (90% satisfied), **the quality of education** (88% satisfied), teaching methods (82% satisfied), campus facilities (82% satisfied), educational costs (80% satisfied), and the grading system (77% satisfied) – all are highly rated..

### > Culture and the pleasures of everyday life contribute to the satisfaction expressed

**Satisfaction was particularly high in connection with France's cultural and touristic opportunities** (92% and 91% satisfaction, respectively). Similarly, the **quality of everyday life** (88% satisfied), outings and leisure activities (87% satisfied), the French way of life (86% satisfied), and the health system (83% satisfied) were among the points deemed most satisfying by current and recent students.

### Perceptions differ by study locations

With respect to housing and the cost of living, results are very different depending on whether the respondent is or was located in Paris or elsewhere in the country. Those studying outside Paris tended to be much happier on this dimension: 66% satisfied with housing options (vs. 48% in the Paris region), 63% satisfied with the cost of living (vs. 50% in Paris), 60% satisfied with the cost of housing (vs. 41%).

### > A warmer welcome

**The various aspects of the welcome** that students receive in France are also judged **largely satisfactory**, but less so than with other areas. Nevertheless, **the increase in satisfaction rates over the past four years is substantial**, as evidenced by improvement on the following points: the friendliness of the French people (73%, up 5 points), the reception given to foreigners in France (72%, up 7 points), social integration (73%, up 4 points).

### > Room for improvement

**Areas where satisfaction remains relatively low nevertheless showed improvement: the cost of living** (58% satisfied, up 7 points from 2013), housing options (59%, up 8 points), **housing cost** (53%, up 8 points), **opportunities to work in France post-degree** (53%, up 10 points), and **administrative requirements** (51%, up 6 points). There is no real disparity between what students preparing to come to France expect to find once they arrive and the levels of satisfaction recorded place et les niveaux de satisfaction enregistrés.



88% of respondents appreciate the quality of life in France



73% of respondents are satisfied with the friendliness of the French people (up 5 points from 2013)



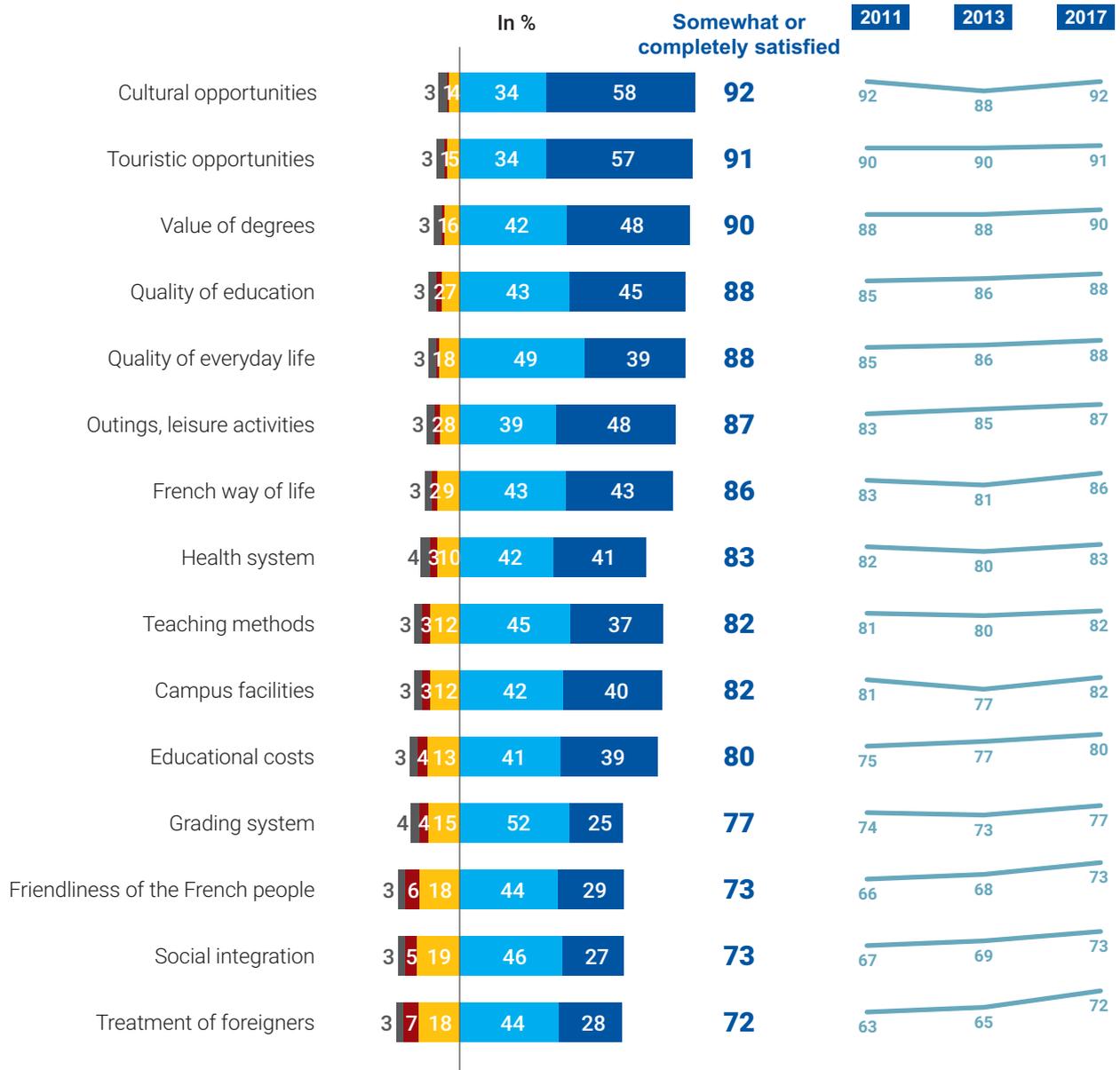
A high level of satisfaction among respondents in cohorts 2 and 3

■ Somewhat satisfied    ■ Completely satisfied  
■ No opinion    ■ Very unsatisfied    ■ Somewhat unsatisfied

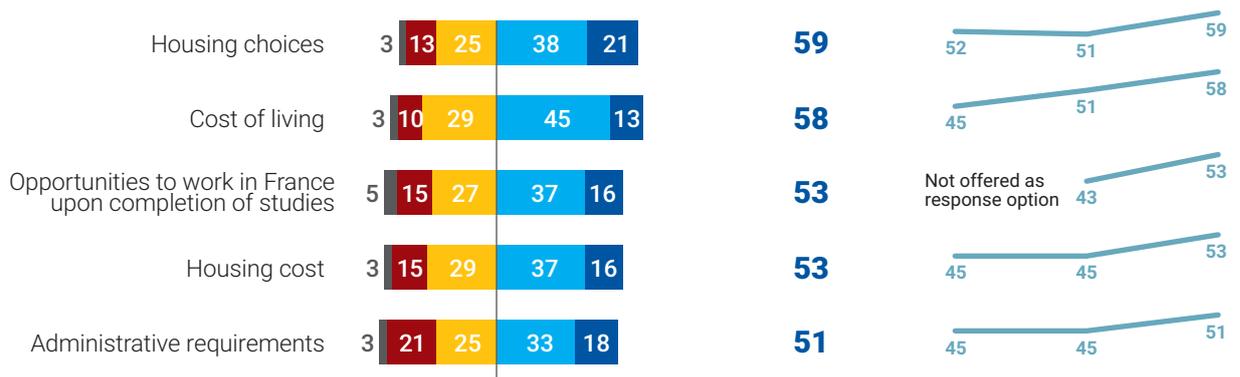
**QUESTION (COHORTS 2 AND 3):**

How satisfied are you / were you with the following aspects of French life and education?

Basis: All of cohorts 2 and 3 (N = 11,717)



**Areas where there is room for improvement, though dissatisfaction is less than in previous years**



## An academic stay in France that brings real personal enrichment

The **assessment** of those who have completed their academic stay in France (cohort 3) is **very positive on the subjects of personal enrichment** (96% reported having benefitted personally) and **professional gain**, though less overwhelmingly: 88% consider their stay in France to have helped them derive professional benefit

from their studies; 85% deem it useful in their current professional capacity (up 5 points from 2013); and 85% believe it will be useful in the future. To a lesser degree, 76% believe that their stay in France helped in their career development (up 6 points from 2013).

**84%**

of respondents hope to gain professional experience in France

**22%**

realize that hope

## Working in France after graduation

As in 2013, **84% of students in cohorts 1 and 2 declare interest in extending their stay in France in order to gain professional experience**: 43% even say that they “definitely” intend to remain in France for an initial work experience.

**In fact, just 22%** of those in cohort 3 stayed on to work (though 36% of the French speakers did so). 44% would have liked to stay but could not arrange to do so.

# A STAY THAT IMPROVES ONE'S FRENCH AND HELPS BUILD CLOSE TIES WITH FRENCH SPEAKERS AFTER GRADUATION

## Improving one's French

### > Proficiency levels before studying in France

Of the total pool of survey respondents, 17% were native speakers of French. Only 16% reported having a poor or nonexistent command of French before arriving in the country; 18% reported fair proficiency; 23%, good proficiency; and 26%, fluency though perhaps not native. These results are in line with previous surveys.

**17%** of students surveyed were native speakers of French

### > Progress in French during the stay

16% of students who were not native speakers of French took courses in French expressly to prepare for their stay in France (21% of students in cohort 1). 41% had already studied French before planning to study there.

Following their stay in France, a majority (57%) of students who were not native speakers reported having attained fluency in French. 22% rated their level as good; 12% as fair. Only 9% reported having a low level of proficiency at the end of their studies in France.

**57%** of those who were not native speakers reported having achieved fluency by the end of their stay

## QUESTION: What is / What was your level of proficiency in French before arriving in France?

Basis: Entire sample

	In %	ALL		
French is my native language, and I live in a country that is either wholly or partially French-speaking	15	17%	French is my native language, but I do not live in a French-speaking country	17%
French is my native language, but I do not live in a French-speaking country	2			
I speak / I already spoke French fluently	26	67%	Fair or better command of French	67%
I have / I already had a good command of French	23			
I have / I already had a fair command of French	18			
I understand / I understood a little French	11	16%	Poor command of French	16%
I don't / I didn't speak a word of French	5			

## After the stay



retain personal connections in France

### > Frequent use of French

Nearly three-fourths (72%) of the students in cohort 3 who are not native speakers of French reported using French as a working language (42% of them “very often”).

The use of French in work settings is particularly high among respondents from North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa (97% and 92%, respectively).

Its use in social settings is also widespread: **76% of former students who are not native speakers reported using French to communicate with friends** (including 35% who do so “very often”).

### > Frequent contacts with France

Two-thirds of former students (65%) say they have maintained personal connections in France (including 32% “a great deal”). Although this proportion remains high, it has dropped from previous surveys (70% in 2013 and 75% in 2011).

40% of former students who do not live in France reported having already returned for personal reasons; 30% have done so for professional reasons. 45% and 40%, respectively, intend to do so in the future.

## France Alumni :

### 4 of 10 students are aware of the network, which elicits great interest



are interested in the France Alumni network

### > Awareness increases upon returning home

Four out of 10 students (39%) reported being aware of the France Alumni network. It stands to reason that returning students – alumni – would be most likely to know about a network of students in a situation similar to theirs, as 45% of the alumni in the sample do. But France Alumni also enjoys a fair level of notoriety among those headed for France (34%) and those presently studying in the country (33%).

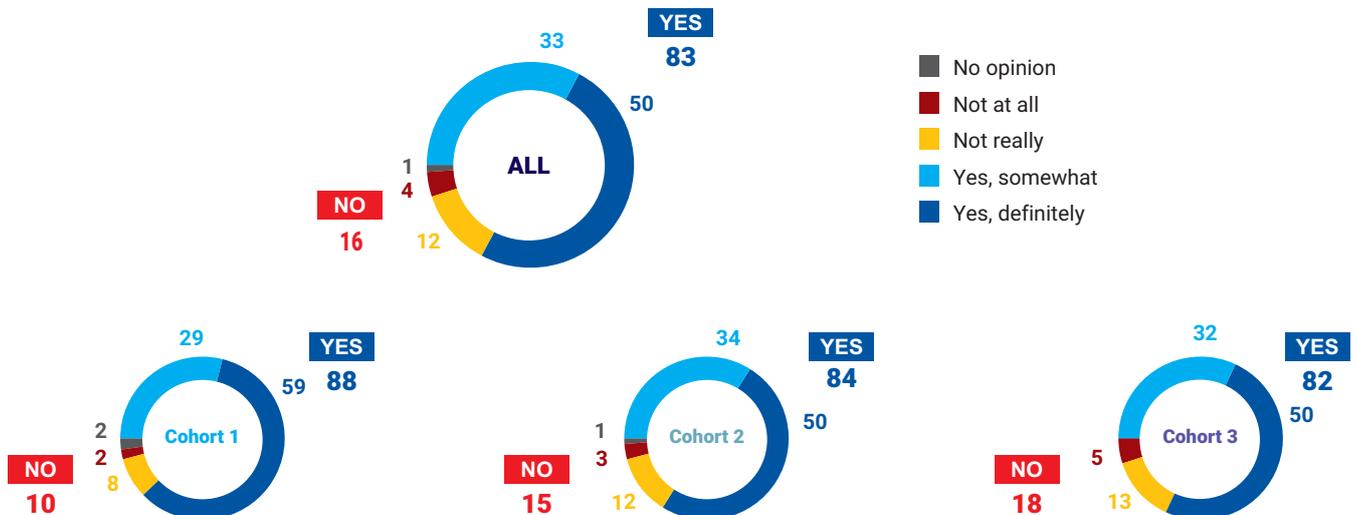
A third of students are aware of the France Alumni website (42% of those in cohort 3), and 17% report having already visited it (22% in cohort 3).

### > Strong demand

Interest in an alumni site runs very high: 83% of survey respondents declared their interest in this type of network (50% “definitely” so). The rate of interest was even higher among intending students (cohort 1: 88%, including 59% “definitely”).

**QUESTION:** The France Alumni website allows users to connect with other international students who have studied in France. It offers various services, including job offers. Would such a network be of interest to you?

Basis: All respondents except those that completed the survey through the France Alumni website (N = 7,949)



# THE INFORMATION THAT CAMPUS FRANCE PROVIDES IS WIDELY USED AND APPRECIATED

## Campus France's major role in informing survey respondents

### > Using the Web to gather initial information

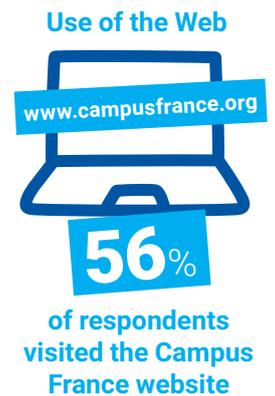
To gather information about France beforehand, survey respondents relied on the Campus France website (56%, including 69% of cohort 1). Next they turned to personal acquaintances (42%) or other websites (34%).

Campus France's offices abroad, known as "Espaces," were used by one in three respondents (32%, including 42% of respondents in cohort 1), placing them ahead of staff and faculty at the student's home institution (28%) and other official information sources such as the Alliance Française and France's embassies and consulates (25%).<sup>2</sup>

### > The growing influence of social networks

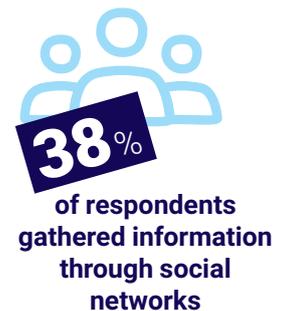
**Social networks are widely used.** One in four respondents reported having used social network accounts other than those of Campus France to gather information about France before departure; 13% used Campus France accounts. The rate of use of social networks was significantly higher among students in cohorts 1 and 2.

The Campus France website and the agency's local offices tend to receive greater use among students from South America (72% and 41%, respectively, vs. the global averages of 56% and 32%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (65% and 43%).



### QUESTION: From the following list, which resources did you use to gather information on France prior to departure?

Basis: Entire sample	In %	ALL	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Campus France website	56	69	59	49	
Personal contacts (family, friends)	42	47	46	38	
Other websites	34	35	36	33	
The Campus France office in my country (Campus France information office)	32	42	35	26	
Faculty and staff at my home institution	28	25	23	32	
Other official sources (e.g., Alliance Française, embassy)	25	25	18	30	
Social networking (Facebook, Twitter) accounts not managed by Campus France	25	34	30	18	
Social networking (Facebook, Twitter) accounts maintained by Campus France	13	27	16	6	
Student fairs	12	16	13	10	
Press / media	11	14	10	11	
French secondary schools	7	6	9	7	
Other	9	9	8	9	
I can't recall	4	Asked only of cohort 3	Not offered as response option	4	



2. In some 40 countries, students wishing to study in France are required to apply online using a system known as "Études en France." The process involves a personal interview with a local Campus France representative in the student's home country.



**6 in 10 students have had contact with a Campus France Espace**

A good interview?



say yes

## Campus France's offices abroad: widely used by respondents and offering information deemed by most respondents to be of high quality

### > The Campus France offices abroad are well known among students

More than 8 in 10 respondents reported knowing whether or not a Campus France Espace operated in their country. Six in 10 (59%) had already contacted it (a proportion identical to that recorded in the 2013 survey).

The most common form of contact with Campus France's offices abroad is a physical visit (78% of students in cohorts 1 and 2). E-mail contact is also common (54%); telephoning less so (32%) and declining (down 7 points from 2013).

### > The interview: a key moment

59% of respondents who have had contact with a Campus France Espace (cohorts 1 and 2) report having benefitted from at least one in-depth interview with a Campus France representative, a proportion that has steadily increased (up 4 points from 2013 and 9 points from 2011).

**Satisfaction with the Campus France local offices is high and climbing.** The quality of the interview with representatives is the aspect deemed most satisfactory (7.7 out of 10 satisfied, up 0.2 points over 2013), scoring ahead of the quality of information (7.4, up 0.2), the quality of the reception offered (7.3, up 0.2), the usefulness of the documentation available in the office (7.3, up 0.2), and support for the student's plans to study in France (7.1, up 0.2).

### > A place for advice and orientation

As in 2013, the information provided by the Campus France Espaces is found by most visitors and users to be of high quality. This is especially true of orientation information. Materials on the French university system (72% deem it reliable) and the variety of degree programs (68%) are the informational items eliciting the greatest satisfaction, along with information on visa procedures (68%) and French culture (67%). Resources dealing with everyday life (61%), the cost of living (59%), French-language courses (58%), and administrative requirements (58%) earn somewhat lower scores but are still found by majorities to be of good quality. The two subjects respondents find to be least well-handled are financial aid (52%) and housing (50%).

With the exception of information on visa requirements, respondents in cohort 1 (those who have not yet arrived in France) appear to be much more satisfied with the quality of the information made available to them than students in cohort 2 (already in France), a phenomenon also noted in 2013.

Information about France's higher education system:



## The Campus France website: recognized as a reliable source

### > Another source of high-quality information

The information available on the Campus France website is widely seen to be of high quality, especially (as with the Campus France overseas offices) when it comes to orientation (81% for information on the French university system, 76% for program offerings), French culture (76%), and visa requirements (71%), a subject about which approval has grown since the 2013 survey (up 6 percentage points).

### > Learning about the practicalities of everyday life

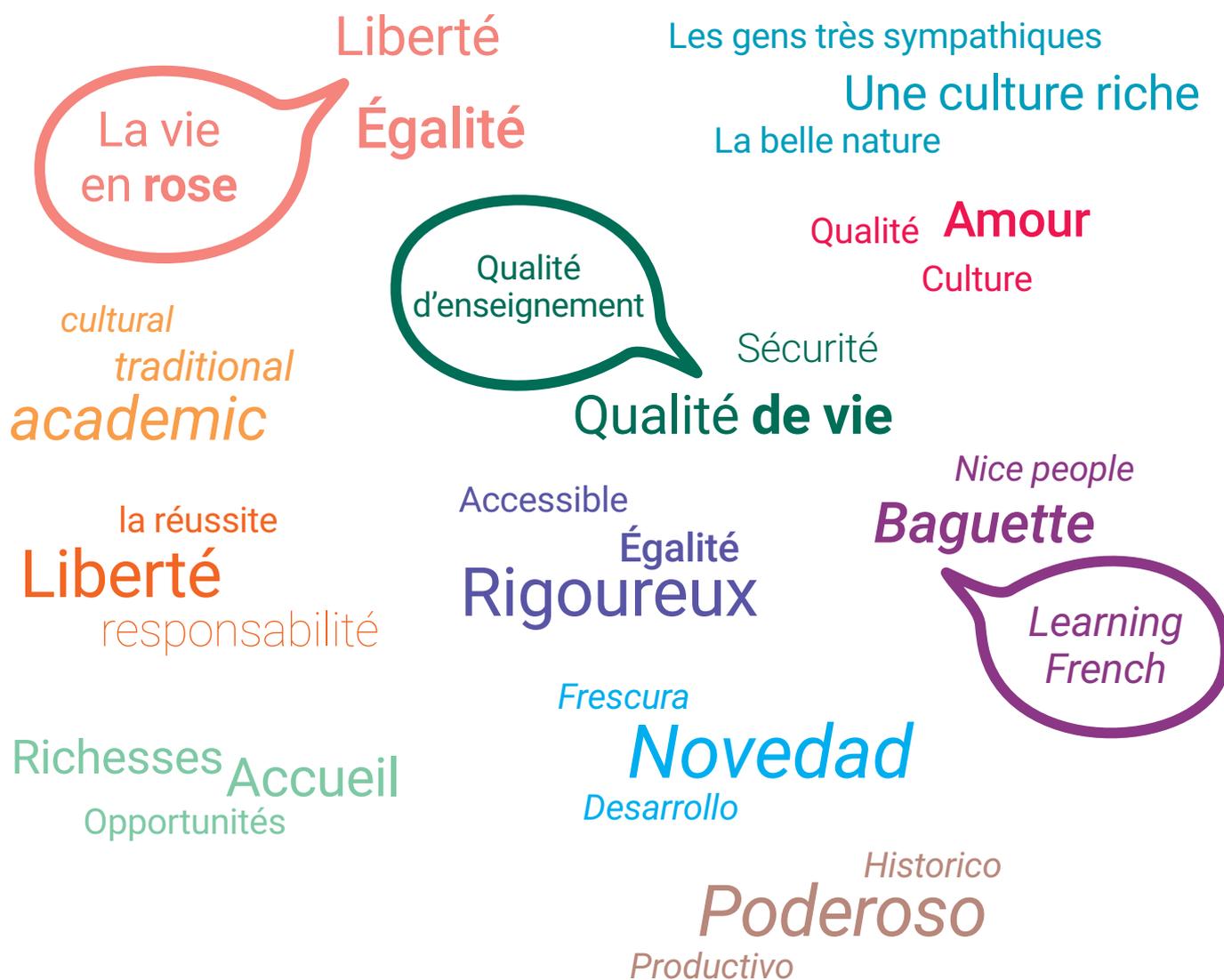
Respondents who visited the site also have a generally positive view of the quality of information offered about everyday life (69%), courses in French as a foreign language (65%), the cost of living (65%), and administrative requirements (63%).

As with the Campus France Espaces, it is information about financial aid (56%) and housing (56%) that is found most wanting.

**Point of caution: information on financial aid and housing**



# Which 2 or 3 words or phrases best express **your image of France**?



## Editorial committee:

Béatrice Khaiat, Director General; Thierry Valentin, Deputy Director General; Anne Benoit, Publications; Emmanuel Becquart, Press, Research, and Institutional Communications; Véronique Mathelin, Deputy for Press, Research, and Institutional Communications; Sylvie Danon, Press Attachée.

The survey was conducted by Kantar Public under the direction of Emmanuel Rivière, Director General, Kantar Public France; Cécile Lacroix-Lanoë, Director of Research; and Marion Petit, Research Officer.

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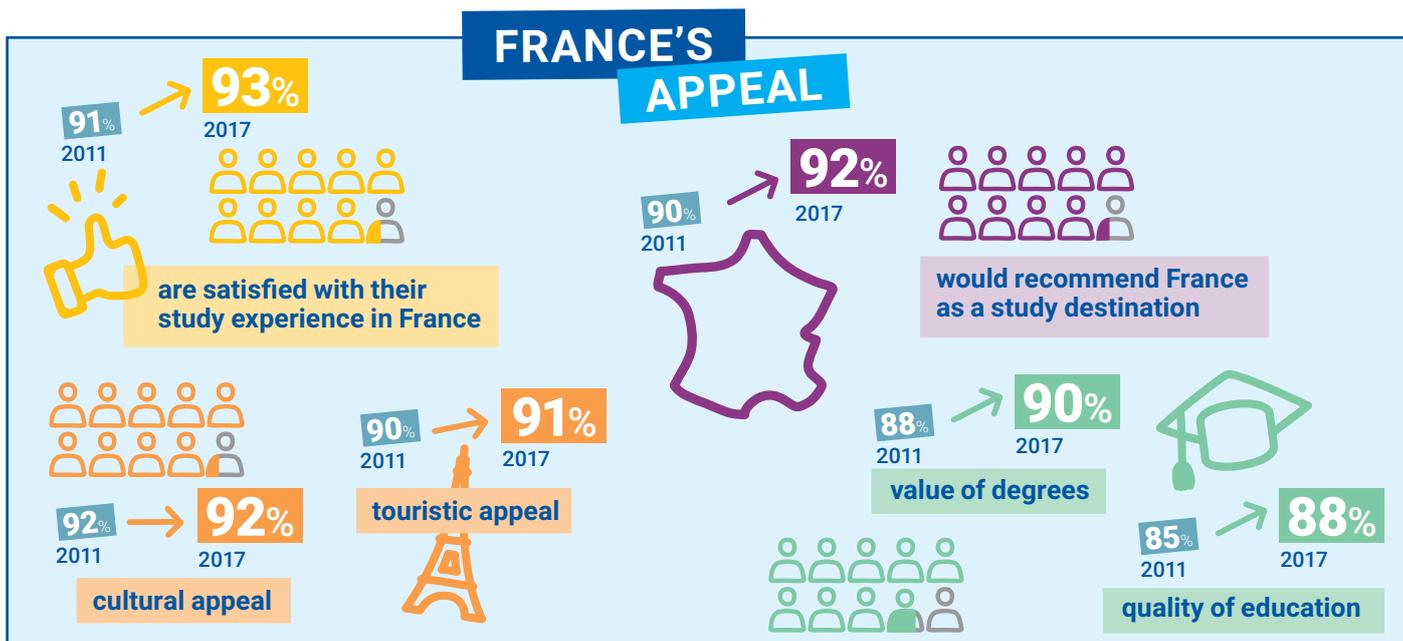
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Operating under the joint oversight of France's ministries of foreign affairs and of education, Campus France promotes French higher education abroad, develops international student services in France, and provides services for recipients of grants and scholarships awarded by the governments of France and other nations for postsecondary study in France.

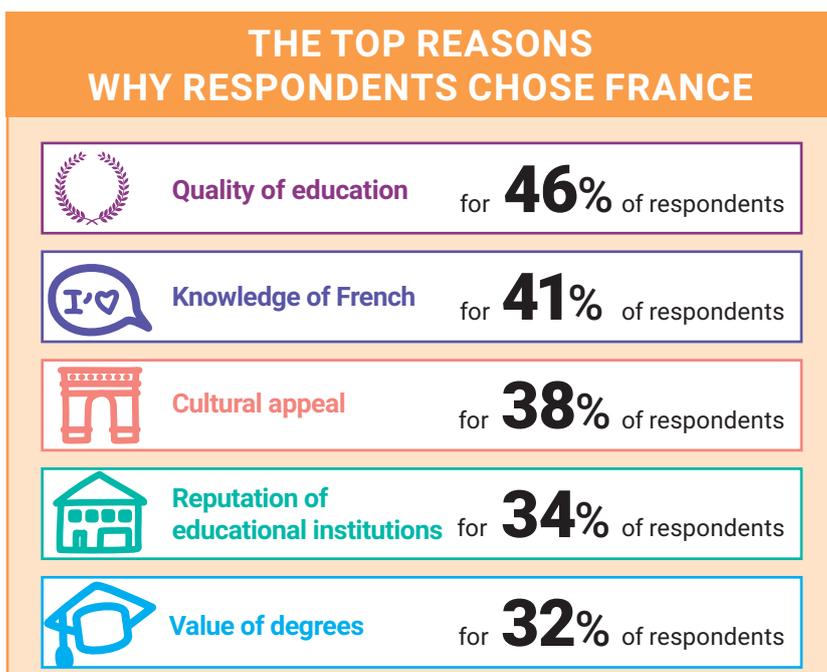
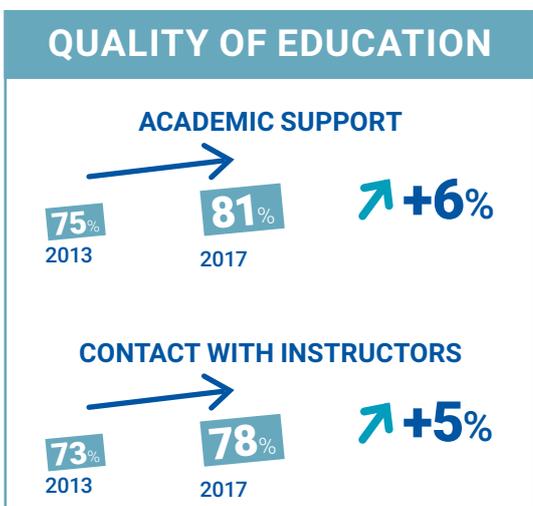
# KEY RESULTS OF THE CAMPUS FRANCE KANTAR SOFRES POLL

## FRANCE'S IMAGE AND APPEAL IN THE EYES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Online poll conducted from July 10 to October 26, 2017, with a sample of 14,245 international students who chose France for their international educational experience



**64%** of respondents believe that France's appeal has increased



### COMPETITION—AND OTHER RECEIVING COUNTRIES

**47%** of the students who ultimately chose France report having hesitated between France and another country (Canada, United Kingdom, United States, Germany)

**32%** of respondents say they visited at least two foreign countries in the course of their study experience

**8 out of 10 students** would like to complement their educational stay with work experience—but only 22% do so.

