

# Actualité en France

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## France's business schools, European excellence



**The Financial Times annual European business school ranking once more places France's business schools among the best in Europe.**

There is no shortage of explanations for the remarkable position occupied by France's business schools in the FT ranking. In addition to the quality of the teaching these institutions provide, we can mention in particular the specifically French "*grande école*" system and the classes that prepare students for

admission, which help bring in high-calibre students. The high standard of alumni career records, the international dimension and the influence of graduates working abroad are also to the credit of these excellent institutions. Businesses, which tend to have an international outlook, are seeking executives capable of taking decisions in an increasingly complex and unstable world. In this respect, France's business schools provide an education that enables unquestionable technical skills to be combined with a very good understanding of the world, in a wide range of fields.

The prestigious HEC Paris (École des Hautes études commerciales de Paris) came top in the latest annual ranking, published in December, leading the field for the 6th successive year, a testament to its perennial high quality of teaching, stable organisational structures and effective educational programmes. HEC Paris was also recognised as the finest business school in the world by the Financial Times 2011 global ranking, which looks at institutions worldwide.

INSEAD – the European Institute of Business Administration – is in second place, ahead of the London Business School, the Iese Business School in Barcelona, the IMD in Lausanne and the IE Business School in Madrid. Three other renowned French schools are also among the top 20: the ESSEC Business School, the ESCP Europe Business School in Paris, and the EM-Lyon Management School. Ten other French business schools also rank among the top 70 European schools.

To produce the ranking, the Financial Times compared four rankings previously published by the newspaper itself: the best MBAs, the best non-degree education for working managers, the best Executive MBAs and the best Masters in Management. Other criteria, such as the proportion of female academics on the staff, the number of foreign students and teachers and the number of teachers with a doctorate, are also taken into account.



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The multiplicity of criteria helps us appreciate the quality of France's business schools and recognise their merits; especially since the majority of them have risen in the ranking in recent years. Take for example the ESSEC, which has moved up from 14th to 10th place in the space of one year, or Euromed Management, which has gone up 13 places in comparison with its 2009 ranking. Improving the quality of their teaching is therefore among the main challenges being taken up by French business schools.

According to a study carried out in 2011 by French magazine "Le Point", France's business schools are becoming increasingly international: nearly 20% of HEC students come from abroad, whilst for EM-Lyon and the ESSEC the figure is 15%, for Euromed Management almost 30% and for ESCP Europe more than 40%. Similarly, an average of 30% of the alumni of these schools go on to work abroad and in the majority of schools at least a quarter of the teaching staff obtained their doctorate in other countries. All of them already schedule a year or a semester of their degree courses abroad, which is resulting in partnerships with other schools and universities worldwide.

The rivalry between the French business schools and the British universities is a genuine challenge which the HEC, INSEAD and ESSEC business schools among others are determined to take up, in a bid to move from European leadership to global leadership; they are setting their sights on training the economic, managerial and entrepreneurial elites of tomorrow.

Barbara Joannon

A selection of websites:

[-http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/465b6ef0-70de-11e0-9b1d-00144feabdc0.pdf](http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/465b6ef0-70de-11e0-9b1d-00144feabdc0.pdf)

[-http://www.lemonde.fr/enseignement-superieur/article/2011/12/14/les-meilleures-ecoles-de-management-d-europe-sont-francaises\\_1618390\\_1473692.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/enseignement-superieur/article/2011/12/14/les-meilleures-ecoles-de-management-d-europe-sont-francaises_1618390_1473692.html)

[-http://www.lepoint.fr/palmares/grandes-ecoles/international.php](http://www.lepoint.fr/palmares/grandes-ecoles/international.php)