



SETTING DOWN A NEW PATH

When France elected its youngest-ever president in 2017, millions of its citizens were eager to see huge changes they hoped would jump start their declining economy. But, over the past two years, the road has been rocky for Emmanuel Macron, who had faced the unenviable task of implementing drastic economic measures without eliminating state subsidies.

Beyond the headline-grabbing yellow vest movement, Macron remains resolute in making France more competitive and more aligned with stronger, less regulated economies elsewhere in the world.

This year, France climbed to the top five in the AT Kearney Direct Investment Confidence Index, its highest-ever ranking.

"France is an open and welcoming country with no less than 28,000 foreign companies employing around 2 million people. 2018 was the best year in the last five years. We attracted 1,323 new foreign investment projects, which means 25 international companies per week took the decision to invest in France. The numbers speak for themselves. France's image is improving thanks to reforms being implemented," **Business France CEO Christophe Lecourtier** said.

Another objective of the Macron government is to become a major contributor to global innovation. It has provided strong support to "La French Tech," the name given to the French startup ecosystem. The latest surveys show around 60% of young people want to start their own business, up from just 13% in 2009. To date, France has established more than 300 incubators and 50 accelerators across the whole country.

As the country's capital, Paris naturally stands at the center of this economic growth. With around 12 million residents, the region accounts for nearly 30% of the country's GDP and has the highest concentration of Fortune 500 companies in Europe.

Away from Paris, several regions across France have exhibited their own strengths for attracting foreign investment and embracing the new economy.

"The digital and technological transformation occurring in France is felt just as strongly here in Strasbourg. We have built a strong reputation for our competence in innovation," said **Eurometropolis of Strasbourg President Robert Hermann**.

This change could not have happened without the realization of France's educational sector to also adapt to the rapid changes around the world. Some universities merged to forge a more visible global presence and stronger research capabilities.

Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation Frederique Vidal shared the logic behind this: "There is a national strategy for research and higher education. It is highly important to be at an international level in order to tackle world issues concerning climate,

health, energy, mobility, among others."

This is in line with national policy: "While we want to achieve better results and be more equitable, at the core, the sector needs to better establish its world leadership," said **Minister of National Education Jean-Michel Blanquer**.

"As the backbone of the economy, education is crucial

in forming minds capable of navigating a world constantly moving," he added.

Following that path, seven institutions in the Bourgogne Franche-Comté Region joined forces in 2015 to form the **Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté (UBFC)**, a federal research university, which represents a total of 60,000 students

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and 8,000 staff.

"UBFC is responsible for the implementation of specific structuring projects and programs common to the members' academic, research and communication strategies. A striking feature of UBFC is the use of a common scientific signature. By going under the UBFC brand, our members increase the region's excellence and visibility in the global education sector," **International Affairs Director Yevgenya Pashayan-Leroy** said.

The increased visibility

abroad will help UBFC raise enrollment of foreign students, which surged 140% in its eight English-taught master degree programs last year. In 2019, it will double the number of such programs, all centered on three areas: advanced materials, waves and smart systems; territories, environment, and food; and comprehensive individual care.

While alliances can be successful models, **Artois University President Pasquale Mammone** stressed that partnerships flourish only

if those schools have their own strengths. Artois formed an alliance with its neighbors: Université du Littoral-Côte-d'Opale and Université de Picardie Jules Verne.

"We want more exchanges for international research and for our masters and doctoral programs. We want to be more visible in our major domains of research and applied learning given our expertise in fields such as artificial intelligence, social links, environmental energy efficiency, and heritage and cross-cultural awareness," Mammone noted.

"Our ambition is two-fold: We want to develop our international activities and we want to continue helping our own region. Artois University is part of the administrative board of the region's bodies tasked to boost our industries here in Northern France," he added.

For its part, the **University of Bordeaux** realized the merits of internationalization earlier than its counterparts. For several years now, it has focused on cultural exchange as well as adopting English as its medium of instruction.

UB runs several multidisciplinary international summer schools that lets students experience life in one of the most renowned regions of France.

Regarded as the most prestigious scientific and engineering school, **Ecole Polytechnique** wants to supply France and the world with future innovators.

"Sustainable development is at the core of our teaching and research. We aim to provide

solutions to the most pressing world issues," said **President Eric Labaye**.

In a fast-changing world, engineering schools must ensure its students remain relevant long after they graduate.

"It is important for us to provide holistic growth for the students. We not only train students to get a general sense of all key digital areas, but we also ensure that in the evolution of technologists, the human dimension of innovation is also considered," **President of Institut Supérieur d'Electronique de Paris (ISEP) Jean-Luc Archambault** said.

"We value applied learning. In fact, our engineers were involved in 30 of the 100 start-ups formed in France last year," Archambault added.

Meanwhile, industry collaboration and internationalization are priorities for **ENSEA**, a graduate school focused on electrical engineering.

"This year, we are proud to say that 100% of our students received international experience," **Director Laurence Hafemeister** said.

"This was a huge jump from our previous rate of 30%. It shows how much we value providing our students the right multi-cultural environment to reach their full potential. We aim to open opportunities for them, whether here with our students or abroad for the French ones," she added.

Already with 150 international partnerships and 30 double degree programs, ENSEA still wants more academic and industry partners. ■



ISEP is a French graduate school of engineering in digital technology. ISEP trains very high-level graduate engineers thoroughly in key areas of the IT world, such as AI, cybersecurity, IoT, electronics, telecommunications & networks, software engineering, and signal-image processing.

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Feel the pulse of Europe in Strasbourg

Located only a few hours from Paris, Brussels, Frankfurt and Munich, Strasbourg in the northeastern region of Alsace plays a large symbolic role in the post-war European project which, over several decades, has evolved into one of the world's most successful political and economic blocs.

With a population of 35 million, Strasbourg is home to the European Parliament, Council of Europe, European Court of Human Rights, as well as 75 diplomatic representations and consulates.

Dubbed the Capital of Europe, the city's metropolitan composition is strengthened by the more than 11,000 foreign students who make up

over 20% of the total student population.

With four Noble Prize winners in Physiology or Medicine working within its walls, the University of Strasbourg is undisputedly the city's leading academic and research institution. Because around one-third Alsatians are aged 25 and under, the city has nurtured a robust startup climate that attracts investors, both from France and further afield.

"We are at the heart of Europe. While we are a city full of history and culture, we also have significant strengths in technological innovation, anchored by our universities," **Eurometropolis of Strasbourg President Robert Hermann** said.

By setting up five certified competitiveness clusters (life sciences and therapeutic innovation, urban vehicle innovation and mobility solutions, water quality innovation, energy efficiency, fiber-based eco-materials), Eurometropolis aims to create an ecosystem that encourages convergence and interdisciplinary collaboration, similar to that found in its sister city, Boston, Massachusetts.

"We strongly value our relationship with the city of Boston and the United States as a whole. Eli Lilly, for instance, continues to massively invest here with its largest manufacturing site in nearby Fegersheim. We have many other American companies located here as well and that number is growing," Hermann said.

Drawing inspiration from Boston, Strasbourg announced an ambitious project to transform 1.5 hectares in its city center into a techno park called NextMed, which aims to

create even more opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and strengthen the city's reputation as an incubator of global innovation.

Located just a few steps away from NextMed is Research Institute Against Digestive Cancer (IRCAD France), a world-renowned pioneer in less invasive surgical techniques. Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, IRCAD allows surgeons from anywhere in the world to obtain high-level surgical training.

"We have gone to great lengths to create a collaborative environment within our city as we offer the foundational elements that can generate the kind of globally game-changing innovation we want to be known for," **Eurometropolis of Strasbourg Vice President Catherine Trautmann**, a former member of the European Parliament and a long-time advocate of innovation and entrepreneurship. ■

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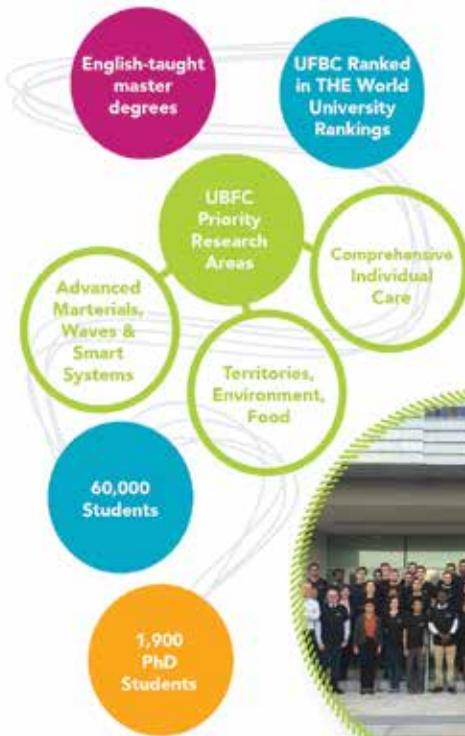
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UBFC federates 7 HER Institutions operating in the Bourgogne—Franche-Comté Region and sharing a common strategy:

- University of Burgundy (UB)
- University of Franche-Comté (UFC)
- University of Technology of Belfort-Montbéliard (UTBM)
- National Engineering Institute in Mechanics and Microtechnologies (ENSMM)
- National Engineering Institute of Agronomic Sciences, Food and Environment (AgroSup Dijon)
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V20 OVERVIEW

With the G20 exploring how to maximize opportunities presented by blockchain technologies, and with businesses needing clarity and certainty around global regulatory frameworks, we have recognised a need for an international body to drive collaboration between government and industry (and other such-key stakeholders moving forward) to deliver a coordinated response to the updated standards proposed by the FATF. Led by a collective of international trade industry associations, a one-day event will be held in parallel to the G20 Summit in Osaka, Japan, with representation from leading digital asset exchanges as well as key domestic industry representative bodies. The goal of the event is to take a unified approach in developing a solution that would be workable for business and acceptable for regulators.

KEY V20 INITIATIVES

1. An urgent meeting of key parties during the G20 Summit in Osaka including government agencies and crypto companies, as well as notable representatives of the FATF working group
2. A coordinated proposal for 'bottom up' regulation by the industry and to influence the standards proposed by FATF to better reflect the unique nature of virtual asset transactions
3. A proposal for the extension of the timeline for the updated FATF standards to come into effect to allow an appropriate response to be prepared
4. Development of protocols and standards to underpin a new platform (or similar) to meet the information collection requirements of FATF

FINANCIAL ACTION TASK FORCE

In February 2019, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) put forward proposed standards that would require virtual asset providers, including cryptocurrency exchanges, to not only verify their customers' identities but also the recipients of their customers' transfers. FATF has sought industry feedback on these standards, due to take effect during the G20 Summit in Osaka in June this year.

FATF is an inter-governmental body that sets global standards to combat anti-money laundering and terrorist financing (AML/CFT) as well as other threats to the integrity of the international finance system. In 2018, it announced that its international standards for illicit finance regulations would now apply to virtual assets with more precise instructions coming in 2019.

FOUNDING MEMBERS

The following organisations in the United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore and Australia are inviting more nations to join the Virtual Asset Service Provider Summit to unite the industry.



INDUSTRY MEMBERS

Our national trade associations exist with the support of industry partners and members. We invite you to join today.



G20 JAPAN SUMMIT

The V20 is a two-day event in Osaka alongside the G20 Summit to discuss the FATF Standards with Industry and including FATF and/or G20 representation. Hosted in partnership with Japanese Industry (JVCEA), the participants would include Singapore, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, associations, and appropriate delegates from a number of the world's leading crypto companies and Virtual Asset Service Providers.

The V20 follows the initial event at G20 Brisbane 2014 (Australia), that brought together what became the signers of the GBF Memorandum of Understanding a year later

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