

France Feedback

Fewer students in France sourced their programme via the Internet this year with many relying on the advice of an advisor instead. However, there was a disparity between those using an agency for advice and those actually booking with one.

France Feedback at a glance

Total number of students: (female 72, male 22, unknown 4) 98
Average age in years: 25.9
Average length of programme in weeks: 12
Average number of students in class: 11
Average number of hours of language tuition per week: 19
% of students who found out about their course through an agent: 53
% of students who booked through an agent or adviser: 33
% of students who had been on another language programme: 43
% of students who would recommend their school: 96

Student nationality

Western Europeans continue to dominate the student population in France; with the UK, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Germany all featuring in the nationality top 10. There was a noticeable decline in the number of German students studying in France, however. In first place last year, they accounted for just three per cent of all respondents in 2008, down on the 16 per cent recorded previously (see LTM, January 2008, pages 16-17). The UK and Spain picked up the slack, however, with a 23 per cent and a six per cent respective share of the student market.

Mexicans were in surprise joint-second place this year – 80 per cent of those in the poll were at one school. And while Australasians dropped out of the running almost entirely, the number of Latin American and Asia students peaked, with a 15 per cent and 14 per cent respective share, compared with four per cent and eight per cent previously. Japanese students outdid their regional neighbours, Korea, this year and accounted for seven per cent of the nationality base, compared with three per cent previously.

Student motivation

A majority of respondents (64 per cent) indicated

that they presently used French for study purposes while 16 per cent said that they used it in the workplace. Interestingly, 19.5 per cent of students said that they planned to use their language skills for university/college studies at home with a further 19.5 per cent of respondents saying that they intended to enter into tertiary studies in France. There was good representation from high school aged students this year – 31 per cent fell into the 12-to-15 year old or 16-to-19 year old categories (compared with 24.5 per cent in 2007) – however, it should be noted that one school was responsible for all but one of these respondents.

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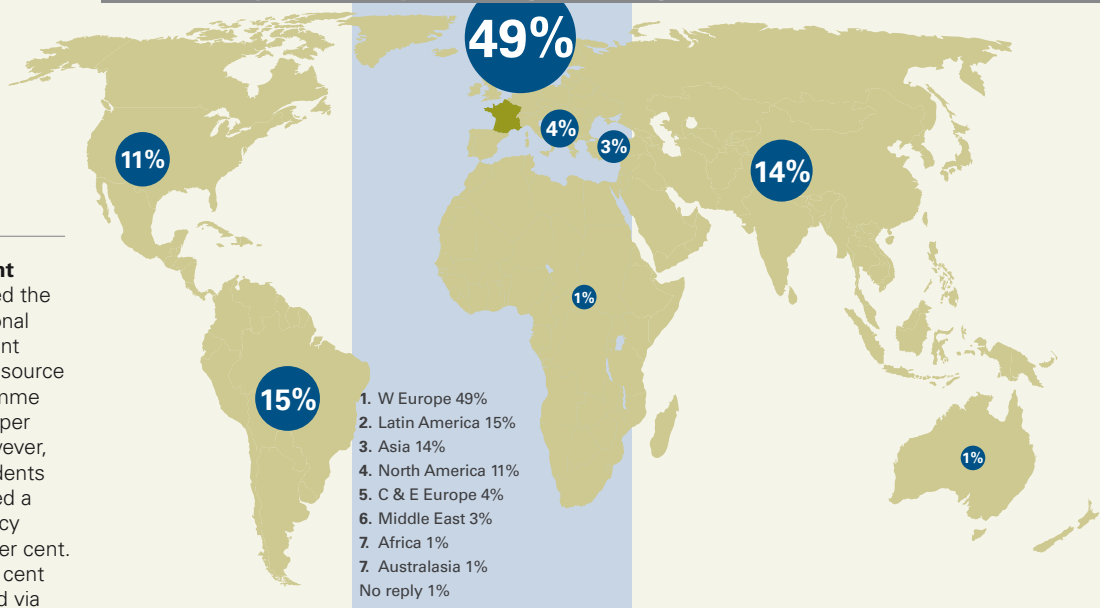
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Student respondents by world region of origin



Student enrolment

Respondents valued the opinion of educational advisors; 53 per cent used an agency to source a language programme compared with 33 per cent last year. However, the number of students who actually booked a course via an agency dipped to just 33 per cent. Conversely, 49 per cent had actually booked via an agency in our previous survey. Elsewhere, there was a slump in the number of students sourcing a school via the Internet, down 24 percentage points to just 13 per cent. Seventy per cent were content with both class size and nationality mix, with just 26 per cent reporting to the contrary. Ten per cent of students said that there were too many of their compatriots in their class, however, a majority of whom were either Swiss or German.

Standard of the schools

Overall, students were impressed with the teaching standard at their schools; 93 per cent rated teaching staff to be either excellent or good (down one percentage point). Meanwhile, locale was extremely important to language learners; when asked why they chose their school, several acknowledged that a school's proximity to either the mountains, the beach or a large city affected their choice.

Living in France

Over half of all feedback respondents thought that the cost of living was higher in France than it was in their home countries, while 35 per cent thought that it was on a par. Of those who deemed it more expensive, 21.5 per cent were Mexican, 12 per cent were American and 10 per cent were Belgian.

Top nationalities

24%

1. UK

11%

2. Mexican

1. W Europe 49%
2. Latin America 15%
3. Asia 14%
4. North America 11%
5. C & E Europe 4%
6. Middle East 3%
7. Africa 1%
8. Australasia 1%
- No reply 1%

2. US 11%
4. Japanese 7%
5. Spanish 6%
6. Belgian 5%
7. Swiss 4%
8. Colombian 3%
8. Korean 3%
8. German 3%

How did you find your programme?

53%

1. Recommended by an agent

23%

2. Recommended by a friend/relative

3. I found it on the Internet 13%
4. I saw it advertised 5%
- No reply 6%

In my class there are...

70%

1. The right amount of students

10%

2. Too many who speak my language

3. Too many students 8%
3. Too many students from one other country 8%
- No reply 4%

How easy is it to practise French with native speakers?

47%

1. Quite easy

29%

2. Quite hard

3. Very easy 12%
4. Very hard 10%
- No reply 2%

Student reasons for school selection included:

- "Because the students are older and the social programme is great"
- "The programme fit my language level"
- "I chose it because it was so near to Paris by train and the website looked impressive"
- "It was the best option; nice town; relatively small, with a good French school near the capital"
- "The mountains, the skiing and hiking opportunities"

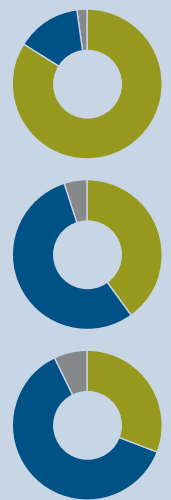
Did you book your course through an agent or an educational advisor?

- Yes 33%
- No 52%
- Unknown 15%



Before looking for your course, did you know where you wanted to study?

- Country**
- Yes 84%
 - No 14%
 - Unknown 2%
- City/town**
- Yes 40%
 - No 55%
 - Unknown 5%
- School**
- Yes 31%
 - No 62%
 - Unknown 7%



Thank you to the following schools for participating in our survey: Centre International des Langues, Manosque; CIPEL, Marseille; Eurocentres, La Rochelle; Ifalpes, Annecy; Institut de Touraine, Tours; IS Aix-en-Provence, Provence; ISEFE – Université de Savoie, Chambéry; Langues Sans Frontières, Montpellier.