The international relations field spent a long time finding its identity in the academic world. At the outset, it was assimilated to the history of war and peace, the activities of the strategists and those of the diplomats who followed them on the world stage. The growing importance of diplomatic history corresponded to the dream of peaceful conflict resolution. However, the twentieth century saw the emergence of forces which gradually reduced the role of the traditional diplomatic actors; ideologies and the means of massively disseminating them, the ability to produce and exchange (ideas and merchandise alike), the ability to invent technologies which render obsolete the territorial conquests which used to be the expression of power, rapid communications networks have all made the Nation-States seem old-fashioned.

Are these political forms which have shaped individual identities exhausted? The new international actors - the large multinational corporations or, in terms of media coverage at least, the NGOs (non-governmental organisations) - might lead us to think so. On the other hand, some specialists see the latest arrival on the international scene - the European Union - as an original attempt by the States of the past to preserve one part of their role in another form, namely the part which public opinion is least likely to call into question: ensuring the security and development of a community shaped by a common history.

We can see that international relations is an interdisciplinary field par excellence, one which calls for a simultaneous interest in law, economics, conflicts (increasingly provoked by the scarcity of natural resources, such as water), cultures, languages, geopolitics, history, mathematical models and so on. It is also the field where uncertainty is a fact of life, since forecasts are often cruelly refuted by events which slip through the nets of our systems, however clever these may be.

See "Social Economy - Humanitarian Action - Development Assistance" and "Law" data sheets as well.

**Universities**

In the universities, it is generally possible to specialise in international law, political science or international relations at Masters level. French universities offer a large number of such Masters programs to foreign students with at least three years of post-secondary studies in related fields (law, political science, economics, history and sometimes geography, in function of the diploma sought).

Many programs at Master 2 level are presented on the website of the [Eudroil network](http://www.eudroil.net), under "Political Science", "International Law", "International Public Law".

**Programs of study:**

Amiens, [http://www.u-picardie.fr](http://www.u-picardie.fr): Political Knowledge and Practice, Europe and International


Clermont-Ferrand 1, [http://www-u-clermont1.fr](http://www-u-clermont1.fr): Diplomatic Careers, Contemporary World


Marne-la-Vallée, [http://www.univ-mlv.fr](http://www.univ-mlv.fr): Comparative Political Cultures, Geopolitics and Research


Nîmes, [http://www.unice.fr](http://www.unice.fr): European and International Regulations


**Websites of the IEPs:**
- Bordeaux: [http://www.sciencespobordeaux.fr](http://www.sciencespobordeaux.fr)
- Lille: [http://95.63.2.i](http://95.63.2.i)
- Strasbourg: [http://www.iep.u-strasbg.fr](http://www.iep.u-strasbg.fr)

**SPECIALISED SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES**

**EHESS, École des hautes études en sciences sociales (School of Advanced Studies in Social Science), [http://www.ehess.fr](http://www.ehess.fr), Paris:** Research Masters in Political Studies, open to foreigners with at least 3 years of prior university studies.

**INALCO, Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilisations), [http://www.inalco.fr](http://www.inalco.fr), Paris:** Professional in International Expertise open to applicants with a diploma corresponding to 4 years of university studies and knowledge of one Oriental language or who have completed the institute’s basic program.

**IPRIS, Institut privé de relations internationales et stratégiques (Private Institute for International and Strategic Relations), [http://www.ipris-france.org](http://www.ipris-france.org), Paris:** private diploma equivalent to 4 or 5 years of university studies in International Relations, Economics and International Relations, European Strategic Issues or International Actions of Local and Regional Bodies.

**HEP-HEI-ESI, Paris, [http://www.hep-hei-esi.net](http://www.hep-hei-esi.net), two schools in this group - École des Hautes Études Internationales (School for Advanced International Studies) and École des Hautes Études Politiques (School for Advanced Political Studies) - offer programs at different levels, from 1st cycle to Masters in Strategic Studies and Defence Policy, International Affairs, International Civil Service and Political Science; the CEDS, Centre d’études diplomatiques et stratégiques (Centre for Diplomatic and Strategic Studies), [http://www.ceds-fr.com](http://www.ceds-fr.com), offers decision-makers responsible for their country’s foreign relations, career diplomats, consular officials or private-sector executives with the Masters indicated above a Doctorate in International Relations and Diplomacy, as well as various other further training courses and programs.**

**CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES**

The Catholic universities offer a certain number of programs specialised in international law:


**USEFUL LINKS**

- Institut français des relations internationales: [http://www.iiri.org](http://www.iiri.org)
- Centre d'études et de recherches internationales: [http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com](http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com)
- Fondation pour la recherche stratégique: [http://www.frstrategie.org](http://www.frstrategie.org)
- Institut de relations internationales et stratégiques: [http://www.iris-france.org](http://www.iris-france.org)

**UNIVERSITY DIPLOMAS**

Certain universities offer degree programmes in International Law and Political Science for foreign students seeking to prepare for university studies in France:

- Paris 2: [http://www.u-paris2.fr](http://www.u-paris2.fr): Public International Law, Political Science

**POLITICAL STUDIES INSTITUTES**

The nine Instituts d’études politiques (Political Studies Institutes, IEP) are highly selective “Grandes Écoles”, often attached to universities (with the exception of Sciences Po in Paris). They constitute the leading institutions for the study of international relations and political science in France. Foreign students can enrol in the classic curriculum, leading to a diploma corresponding to 5 years of university studies, or they can choose specific programs leading to one of two Political Studies Certificates: the CEP (annual program) or the AEP (semester program).

Students applying for the classic curriculum must have a diploma equivalent to the French baccalauréat and take an entrance examination. For the CEP/AEP programs, admission is based on the student’s academic record.

Sciences Po in Paris offers different international programs for the first two years of post-secondary study (known as the first cycle):

- Duble cyclem Science-Political Science 1st cycle with the Université Paris 6: [http://www.sciences-po-paris.fr](http://www.sciences-po-paris.fr), formation cycle, annee1/ cycle1a1_scientifique.htm

Foreign students can also go directly into the Masters programs (Professional or Research) offered by Sciences Po Paris: