

# COMMUNICATION PUBLIC RELATIONS

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With 4,000 communications firms and 10,000 jobs in France alone, “PR” is a fact of modern life. Professional communications services are indispensable in many sectors: the arts, sports, advocacy, and politics, as well as in business—where they are differentiated between internal and external communications. Journalists continue to report the news, remaining faithful to varying degrees to the principle of objectivity, but communication specialists play a different role, that of creating and controlling images and perceptions. Journalists and communicators often share a common curriculum at the outset of their higher education but diverge gradually as they advance. Graduates in communications need to have a network of contacts and connections, which they must form very early on. Their indispensable attributes—some innate, some learned—include broad education, knowledge of communication techniques, editing and writing ability, and a good command of English. Programs differ widely; some are very costly.

**Field:** Communication and journalism

Also see the following profiles: *Journalism, Management, Marketing, Advertising, Human resource management.*

#### Professional opportunities:

Agencies: advertising director, consultant, media planner, strategic planner, writer-creator.

Corporations and organizations: director/manager of communications, public relations, or media relations; director/manager of financial communications, corporate social responsibility, sponsorships, or events; director/manager of sales promotions.

## ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN FRANCE

Communications and public relations specialists often train as journalists or in less-specialized fields: political science, business administration, human resources, literature, or the humanities.

IUTs (university-based institutes of technology), universities, business schools, and specialized schools of communications offer programs too numerous to be listed here. All practice selective admissions.

BTS (*brevet de technicien supérieur*, a 2-year technical certificate offered by secondary schools) in business communication, with specializations in internal, external, commercial, and strategic communications.

DUT (*diplôme universitaire de technologie*, a 2-year technical diploma offered by universities) in information and communication (often known as “Info-com”): academic courses coupled with practical training (numerous internships). Many options are possible, from journalism to advertising, opening the way to a wide range of careers and opportunities for further study.

The **universities** also offer various programs leading to a DEUST (a 2-year technical degree) in information, communication, culture, and multimedia. Some areas of specialization are:

- Audio-visual communication
- Documentation
- Information sciences.

*Licence* in information and communication (a 3-year undergraduate program): general education, including history, economics, sociology, theories of communication (concepts, writing, information processing), and practical case studies. Students are advised to continue on for additional specialized training.

**IUP** (university-affiliated professional institutes, admission to programs after 2 years of postsecondary study). Curriculum leads to *diplôme d’ingénieur maître* (master engineer) in 3 years.

Two orientations are possible:

- Information and communication consulting and planning
- New management technologies or management information systems.

*Masters degrees* in information and communication sciences

All 2-year general master’s degrees include some instruction in media; those designed for future programmers focus exclusively on the technical aspects of media.

Research master’s programs pave the way to a doctoral program and a career in research (in a company or nonprofit organization) or higher education.

Individuals holding a *licence* in a related field are automatically eligible to enter the first year of a master’s program, but they must earn the right to continue on for the second year.

• CELSA Paris Sorbonne (University of Paris 4), <http://www.celsa.fr/>, is France’s best-known school of communication. Highly selective admissions to undergraduate and master’s programs in:

- Corporate and organizational communication
- Marketing, advertising, and communication
- Human resources and communication
- Communication, media, and media coverage
- *Magistère* degree in communication.

A research curriculum in information and communication sciences leads to the doctorate.

## Schools of business and management

- Advancia (Paris), [http://www.advancia.fr/advancia.nsf/id/FR\\_Accueil:entrepreneurialmanagement](http://www.advancia.fr/advancia.nsf/id/FR_Accueil:entrepreneurialmanagement)
- CERAM Euro-American Institute of Technology in Sophia Antipolis (near Nice), <http://www.ceram.edu/>:  
4-year curriculum leading to a bachelor in communication
- ISEG executive program (offered at 7 schools in France), <http://www.iseg.fr/fr/index.php>:  
5-year program with the possibility of specializing in advertising and communication beginning in the fourth year.

**Specialized master's programs** (*mastères spécialisés*) at schools of business (1-year programs for graduates of business programs) :

- ESCP-EUROPE, Paris, <http://www.escp-eap.net>: Marketing and communication, media, strategy and management of information systems.
- ESC Rouen, <http://www.esc-rouen.fr>: Corporate communications
- ESC Lille, <http://www.esc-lille.fr>: Communication strategy and management
- ESC Toulouse, <http://www.esc-toulouse.fr>:  
Marketing, management, and communication
- ESC Dijon-Bourgogne, <http://www.escdijon.com>:  
International financial communication
- IDRAC, <http://www.ecoles-idrac.com>: Communication and commercial development
- INSEEC, <http://masters.inseec-france.com>:  
Communication and advertising, marketing, communication and commercial strategy.

## Specialized schools

- EFAP (French school for press attachés), <http://www.efap.com/>: 4-year program leading to degree in communications, certified by the French government as equivalent to a licence or maîtrise.
- IICP (international institute of communication of Paris), <http://www.iicp.fr/>:  
3-year program in public relations, journalism, or marketing/advertising.
- IRCOM (institute of public relations and communication), <http://www.ircom-asso.com>: admission to 1-year program for individuals holding 3-year undergraduate degree; level-2 communication specialist.
- ISCOM Paris (school of communication and advertising), <http://www.iscom.fr/>: undergraduate and graduate programs in journalistic, audiovisual, and multimedia communication and in global business communications. Applicants are accepted directly from secondary school or after 2 years of postsecondary study.
- ISCPA (media institute), Lyon and Paris, <http://www.iscpa-paris.com/>,  
journalism, production, communication. Communication track: a professionally oriented program at the licence level focusing on communication through the media and beyond the media.
- ISTC Lille (institute of communication strategies and techniques), <http://www.istc.fr>. Applicants are admitted after 2 or 3 years of postsecondary study.
- Sciences Com Nantes (school of communication and media), <http://www.sciencescom.org>: communication (through brands, social networks), journalism, new media. Selective admissions by examination of applicants who have completed 2 years of postsecondary study.
- Sup de Com (school of communication) in Lyon, Montpellier, Nantes, <http://www.ecole-supdecom.fr/>

Questions to ask before choosing a private school: How long has it been operating? Does it issue an official student ID card? Does the government recognize its degrees? Does it participate in the student program of the national health insurance system? Does it have an alumni network?

## Institutes of political studies

- France's IEPs (institutes of political studies) offer master's degrees in communication or journalism that are well-regarded in professional circles:
- Paris, <http://www.sciences-po.fr>: new media, international dimensions, firms
  - Lyon, <http://iep.univ-lyon2.fr>: research, corporate communications, institutional culture
  - Aix-en-Provence, <http://www.iep-aix.fr>: organizational communication at the international level
  - Lille, : corporate institutional and financial communications
  - Bordeaux, <http://www.sciencespobordeaux.fr>: public and political communication, public affairs, and interest representation
  - Political communications may also be studied at ISMAPP (institute of public and political management), <http://www.ismapp.com/ismapp/>

## Websites

- AACC, the association of communications consultants, <http://www.aacc.fr>
- French association of lobbyists and public affairs consultants, <http://www.afcl.net/accueil-1-1.htm>
- Association of media relations and communication professionals, <http://www.infopressecom.org/>
  - Interest groups accredited to the European parliament <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/expert/>
  - Guide to careers in communication and media <http://www.sciencescom.org/guide/metiers-communication.php>
- SYNTEC, union of public relations professionals <http://www.syntec-rp.com>

## Keywords for more effective Internet searches

advertising – animation – art – books – business strategy – commerce – commercial art – commercial writing – communication – creative – digital arts – documentation – event management – external relations – graphic design – human resources – humanities and social sciences – illustration – image – information – information management and consulting – interest groups – internal communications – journalism – languages – literature – lobbying – management – marketing – media – mediation and conflict resolution – media relations – multimedia – networks – press relations – public affairs – public relations – publishing – radio communications – sound – spokesperson