

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS POLITICAL SCIENCE

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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.

## ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN FRANCE

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).

Certain universities offer degree programmes in International Law and Political Science for foreign students seeking to prepare for university studies in France. The 9 *Instituts d'études politiques* (Political Studies Institutes, IEP) are highly selective "Grandes Ecoles", 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). Foreign students can also go directly into the Masters programs (Professional or Research) offered by Sciences Po Paris.

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

### ► Websites

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs : <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr>
- French Institute of International Relations : <http://www.ifri.org>
- Center for International Studies and Research  
<http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com>
- Strategic Research Foundation : <http://www.frstrategie.org>
- Institute of International and Strategic Relations : <http://www.iris-france.org>

### ► Keywords

Administration, public administration, agricultural development, Germany, land-use planning, Asia, citizenship, communities, communication, conflict, cooperation, crises, defense, sustainable development, diplomacy, law, environment, United States, Euro-Mediterranean, Europe, evaluation, fiscality, francophone world, geopolitics, public management, governance, habitat, intelligence, journalism, justice, freedom, coast, management, markets, Mediterranean, migration, Arab world, globalization, mountain, negotiation, nutrition, cultural heritage, regulation, public relations, Russia, health, security, society, solidarity, strategy, territory, transition, medicine, urban studies.