

# EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## Promoting knowledge and equality in the Indo-Pacific



The Indo-Pacific region is the world's leading source of student mobility. The top three countries of origin are China, India and Vietnam. The region's universities are represented in the top 100 of the Shanghai ranking, with 22 universities, including 11 Chinese and 6 Australian. Strengthening educational ties and mobility is one of France's priorities and is supported by a dense network of French educational establishments abroad, decentralised campuses, and cooperation projects run both by the operator of the French Ministry of Education and Youth – France Éducation International (FEI) – and by numerous NGOs.

At the same time, despite a few positive developments, such as the adoption of a law criminalising torture in Pakistan and the abolition of the death penalty in Papua New Guinea, the human rights situation in the region remains very poor. France therefore supports several projects promoting human rights, including women's rights and gender equality.

### FRENCH ESTABLISHMENTS ABROAD

The French overseas education network in the Indo-Pacific is a key player in promoting Francophonie (see *Fact Sheet No.9 – Cultural cooperation and Francophonie*) and serving French nationals (see *Fact Sheet No.2 – Demographics and political representation*). By 2023, there is 101 establishments in 31 countries, including 23 in Madagascar, 11 in China and 8 in the United Arab Emirates<sup>1</sup>. The Lycée international français de Taipei, one of the most recent, was inaugurated in 2022.

Some of these establishments are managed directly by the Agence de l'enseignement français à l'étranger (AEFE), such as the Lycée français international Marguerite Duras in Ho-Chi-Minh-Ville. Others have an agreement with the AEFE, such as the École française des Seychelles in Victoria, and others have a partnership, such as the Lycée franco-australien in Canberra.

At high school level, there are fourteen Chinese sections in eleven académies, three Japanese sections, and even two Australian sections in New

Caledonia at the Lycée Dick Ukeiwé in Dumbéa and the Lycée général et technologique La Pérouse in Nouméa. Oriental language sections (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese or Vietnamese) exist in several high schools, including the Cité scolaire Jean de la Fontaine in Paris.

### STUDENT MOBILITY

In 2020, France was the 7<sup>th</sup> most popular destination for international students. Although students from the region mainly go to Anglo-Saxon countries, France remains an important destination. In the 2021-2022 academic year, they represented 16 percent of foreign students in France, and four countries reached the Top 25: China (3<sup>rd</sup>, 27,479), India (14<sup>th</sup>, 6,321), Vietnam (19<sup>th</sup>, 5,259) and Madagascar (23<sup>rd</sup>, 4,667)<sup>2</sup>. For the 2020-2021 academic year, however, China is the leading country of origin for foreign doctoral students in France, and India is ninth.

However, the dynamics are uneven, with the number of Chinese students stagnating over ten years and the number of Indian students tripling. France is aiming to welcome 20,000 Indian students by 2025 and 30,000 by 2030. Campus France plays a key role in promoting French higher education abroad. With branches in thirty countries in the region, this public institution takes part in student fairs and organises its own events.

French students prefer French-speaking and European countries. In 2019, only three countries reached the top 25 destinations for French students on degree-granting mobility: Australia (10<sup>th</sup>, 1,410), Japan (13<sup>th</sup>, 1,121) and New Zealand (24<sup>th</sup>, 335). Overall, countries in the region accounted for less than 4 percent of degree mobility for French students in 2019.

### REGIONAL CAMPUSES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Many French universities and Grandes Ecoles have opened campuses in the Indo-Pacific. These include Sorbonne University in Abu Dhabi, CentraleSupélec engineering school in Hyderabad and Beijing, INSEAD business school in Abu Dhabi and Singapore, ESMOD

<sup>1</sup> "Arrêté fixant la liste des établissements d'enseignement français à l'étranger", June 15, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> "Chiffres clés de la mobilité étudiante dans le monde", Campus France, June 2023.



fashion school in Dubai, Guangzhou, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo, and Cordon Bleu cookery school in ten countries in the region, including four schools in Australia and one in New Zealand.

In April 2023, a Franco-Indian campus was created in the Indo-Pacific in the field of life sciences for health. The “ILIADE” project (Innovation through Plants and AI) is supported by the Université de La Réunion and the Vellore Institute of Technology.

French higher education institutions have forged numerous partnerships to encourage international mobility. Sciences Po has 90 agreements in the Indo-Pacific region, including 18 in China, 11 in Australia and 6 in South Africa.

The Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (Inalco) teaches over thirty languages from the region. These include Drehu from New Caledonia and Tahitian; Malagasy, Urdu and Mongolian; and rare languages such as Telugu from India, Ilocano from the Philippines and Bichelamar from Vanuatu.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

France Éducation Internationale (FEI) is the French Ministry of Education and Youth’s operator for international cooperation. In 2022, it carried out projects in eight countries in the region<sup>3</sup>. In Djibouti, it supports the professionalisation of young people and companies in the transport-logistics sector. FEI’s local centre in La Réunion is involved in projects in the Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar and the Seychelles, where it trains senior civil servants in French.

FEI has sent experts on long-term assignments to Kenya, Indonesia and Vietnam and contributes to the Franco-Indian, Franco-Indonesian and Franco-Kenyan centres for trades and qualifications (CMQ), with the Académie de La Réunion as a partner in the first two. The centres of professional excellence abroad (CEFTE) enable French expertise to be promoted, following the example of the partnership in Durban in South Africa with the Bordeaux academy and Dassault Systèmes, or the partnership in Ho Chi Minh with the Grenoble academy and Schneider Electric (see *Fact sheet No.8 – Economic cooperation and business*).

AFD also plays an important role (see *Fact sheet No.6 – Development aid and the environment*). In

Madagascar, it finances the Formapro project, which aims to improve the quality of vocational training in several sectors, including construction and the hotel industry. In Vanuatu, thanks to an application by the New Caledonian government to the Local Authorities Financing Facility, AFD helped finance the first buildings of the bilingual National University of Vanuatu.

Many French NGOs support educating and teacher training in the region. The Groupement des Educateurs Sans Frontières (GRESF) is running a project to train teachers for bilingual classes in scientific subjects in Laos, and to set up a training centre for the construction industry in the Comoros. Enfants du Mékong is active in six countries in South-East Asia, supporting poor children through education.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

The protection of human rights is mentioned in France’s Indo-Pacific strategy. France raises violations and cases of particular concern in its political dialogues with countries in the region and takes action in multilateral forums.

AFD is helping to finance the Hy Vong project in Vietnam run by the French NGO Batik International to combat violence against women, as well as the Sandratra project in Madagascar run by the NGOs Aide et Action and Solidarité laïque, which aims to provide training and help young single mothers in Antananarivo find employment. Proparco, an AFD subsidiary, is supporting the Indian microfinance institution Annapurna Finance to empower women in rural areas. The Alliances françaises contribute to this action by organising events such as Women’s Rights Day in 2023.

The Prix des droits de l’Homme de la République française, awarded annually to several laureates, has rewarded 18 individuals and organisations from the Indo-Pacific between 2012 and 2022, including Pakistan’s Mary James Gill, South Africa’s Just Grace NPC and India’s POPE in 2021.

August 2023

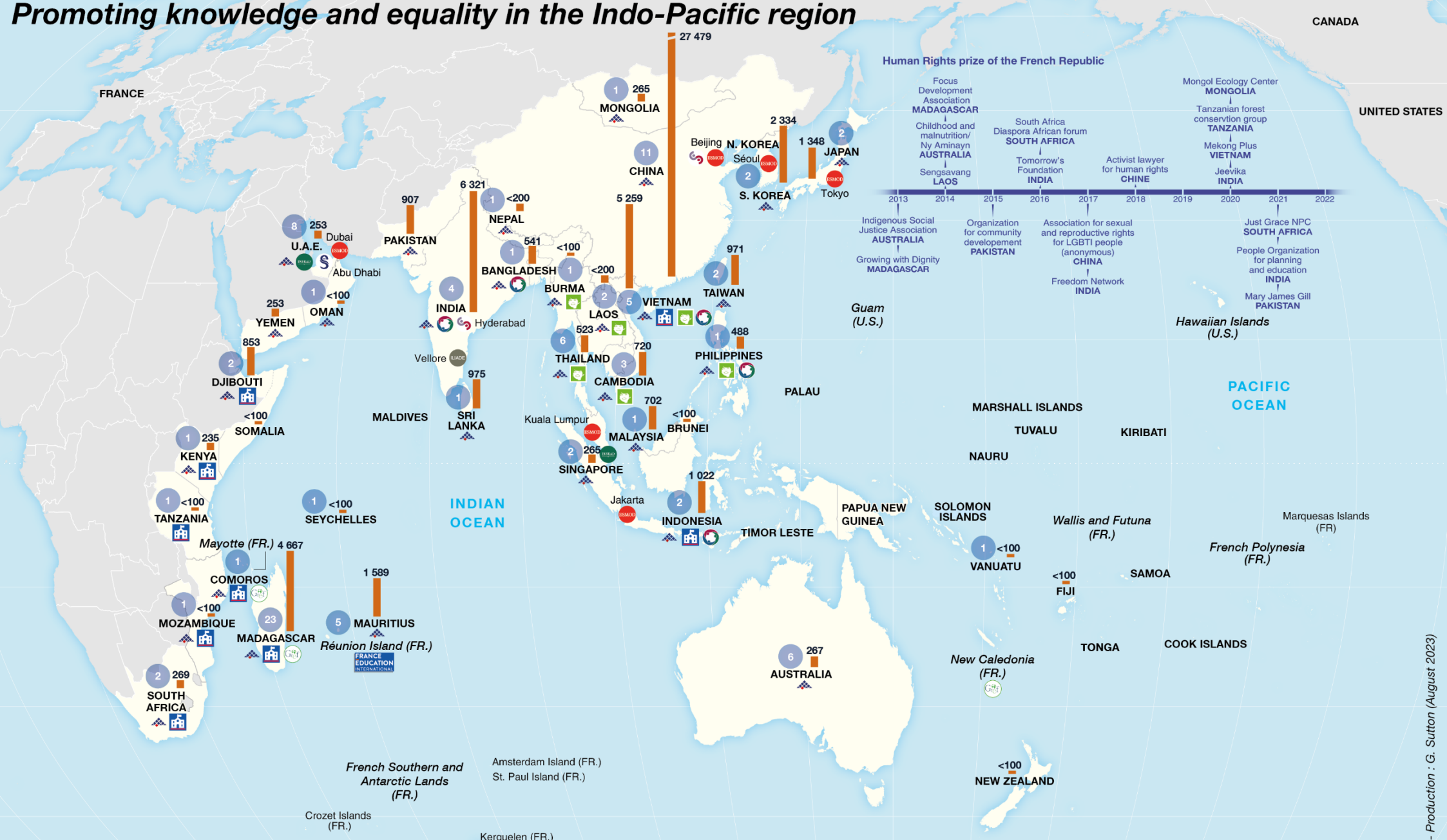
Antoine BONDAZ and Marie DESBONNETS<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> France Éducation Internationale 2022 activity report.

<sup>4</sup> Contact: [a.bondaz@frstrategie.org](mailto:a.bondaz@frstrategie.org) // @AntoineBondaz

# No.10 - EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## Promoting knowledge and equality in the Indo-Pacific region



### French education network abroad (AEFE)

- Number of approved establishments

### Student mobility

- Campus France presence
- Number of students in France (2021/2022)

### Decentralized campus

- Sorbonne University
- CentraleSupélec
- ESMOD
- INSEAD
- Franco-Indian campus in the Indo-Pacific ILIADE

### Educational cooperation

- France Education International (FEI) projects in 2022
- Local FEI center on Reunion Island
- Kaizenvest / Proparco
- Children of the Mekong
- Groupement des Éducateurs Sans Frontières





## ABOUT THE PROJECT

**France in the Indo-Pacific - Proactive power and solutions provider** is an unprecedented research project that consolidates, synthesises and maps France's actors and actions in a region of vital importance to national interests.

It consists in a dozen **thematic fact sheets** intended to provide greater visibility and to highlight what is being done in overseas territories for the benefit of the French people and local populations by ministries, other state actors but also French business and NGOs.

This project ties in with research by FRS, including **two policy papers**: “La France, une puissance d’initiatives en Indo-Pacifique” (November 2022)<sup>5</sup> and “Reconceptualizing French foreign and security policy in the Indo-Pacific” (July 2023)<sup>6</sup>.

### List of Fact Sheets as of September 15th, 2023

- No.1 - Overseas territories
- No.2 - Demographics and political representation
- No.3 - Diplomatic network and official visits
- No.4 - Military presence and defence diplomacy
- No.5 - Security and police cooperation
- No.6 - Development aid and the environment
- No.7 - Humanitarian aid, crises and natural disasters
- No.8 - Economic cooperation and business
- No.9 - Cultural cooperation and Francophonie
- No.10 - Education and human rights
- No.11 - Scientific cooperation and innovation

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This project was initiated by **Antoine BONDAZ, Ph.D.**, director of the “Observatory for Multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific”. He was assisted by **Marie DESBONNETS**, a Sciences Po student and a graduate of IEP Lyon. **Nathan BLUJSTAN**, a graduate from SOAS, translated.

**The Foundation for strategic research (FRS)**, founded in 1992, is a foundation with public utility status (decree of February 26, 1993) that operates in complete independence. Its mission is to analyse strategy and international security issues, and to contribute to the strategic debate in France and the promotion of French thinking abroad.

**FRS conducts research on and in the Indo-Pacific through regional and thematic approaches**, publishes policy papers and reports, organises international conferences, conducts high-level strategic dialogues (bilateral and trilateral), pilots a European exchange platform on the Indo-Pacific and has signed cooperation agreements with the region's leading think tanks.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.frstrategie.org/publications/notes/france-une-puissance-initiatives-indo-pacifique-2022>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.frstrategie.org/en/publications/notes/reconceptualizing-french-foreign-and-security-policy-indo-pacific-2023>