There are nearly 30,000 architects in France. The country's Écoles Nationales Supérieures d'Architecture (ENSA) together enroll approximately 19,000 students, 12% of whom are from outside France. The share of women in ENSA enrollments continues to grow, standing presently at 57%. About 85% of graduates find employment in the field. Postsecondary studies in architecture cover the range of disciplines necessary for the carrying out of architectural projects in cities as well as landscapes.

Higher education in architecture in France is provided by a network of 20 Écoles Nationales Supérieures d'Architecture (ENSA), located throughout the country. The ENSAs operate under oversight of 2 ministries, the Ministry of Culture and Communication and the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Two other institutions, the Institut National des Sciences Appliquées (INSA) in Strasbourg and the École Spéciale d'Architecture (ESA), a private institution in Paris, confer diplomas that are recognized as equivalent to the national diplomas awarded by the ENSAs.

The professional practice of architecture

Degree programs in architecture prepare graduates for employment in firms and agencies providing services in architecture, city planning, interior architecture and design, engineering and consulting, construction, public works, and land use and development. Depending on the degree level, the architect's role ranges from design to the supervision of a building site. The terms of independent practice of architecture are set by law. To operate as an architect under one's own name in France requires the completion of a sixth year of postsecondary study and the acquisition of a credential known as HMONP (Habilitation à la Maîtrise d'Œuvre en Nom Propre).

Multidisciplinary training

The curriculum in Schools of architecture consists in equal measure of instruction in project management and in related disciplines—chief among them the humanities and social sciences, the visual and representational arts (including freehand drawing, perspective, axonometrics, photography, and film), technical sciences, and the history of architecture and urban planning. Training in architecture therefore is provided by multidisciplinary teams composed of professional architects (70% of ENSA faculty are active professional architects), engineers, sociologists, historians, geographers, and others.

A degree ladder consistent with the LMD system

Architecture studies are organized into 3 stages harmonized with the European LMD system, thus facilitating transfers, exchanges, mobility, and international partnerships.

The first stage, lasting 3 years, is organized into 6 distinct semesters (180 ECTS) representing a total of 4,200 of work, including 2,200 hours of instruction. Upon completion, students receive the Diplôme d'Études en Architecture (DEEA), which is equivalent to the Licence. The diploma signifies acquisition of the fundamentals of architecture, the design process, and the project. The first stage includes two mandatory internships, fully integrated into the curriculum and representing 6 weeks (210 hours) of work. It also includes the preparation and successful presentation of a final report worth 4 ECTS credits.

In some Schools, the entire class participates in an international study trip for several days during the first semester.

The second stage, which lasts 2 years, leads to the Diplôme d'État d'Architecte (DEA) which is equivalent to a Master. Graduates master the fine points of managing architectural and city-planning projects and become familiar with the various forms and areas of professional practice as an architect. The 44 distinct semesters of this stage carry 120 ECTS. The stage requires a total of 2,600 hours of work, 1,200 hours of instructional time. Instruction is broken down by theme (including project units, seminars linked to projects or to research, and related thematic electives).

The second stage also includes a mandatory full-time internship lasting 8 weeks and carrying 8 ECTS. The last credit in the second stage is awarded for the final project, which represents 200 hours of individual work over a semester.

The DEA opens the way to advanced study leading to the Diplômes nationaux de Spécialisation et d’Approfondissement en architecture (DSA) and Diplômes Propres aux Écoles d’Architecture (DPEA), which require 1–2 years of work. Students who earn a DEA with a concentration in research may enroll in a Doctoral program in one of 40 research units maintained by the ENSAs in cooperation with university Doctoral departments. Approximately 300 candidates are pursuing a Doctorate in architecture at any given time.
Programs in architecture are designed for individuals who ...

- Want to practice as an architect
- Seek an internationally recognized master-equivalent in architecture
- Wish to acquire cross-disciplinary skills in architecture, art, and humanities
- Seek the advantages of training closely aligned with the work of active professional architects.

France’s 20 Écoles Nationales Supérieures d’Architecture (ENSA)

- École nationale supérieure d’architecture et de paysage de Bordeaux (ENSA PBX): www.bordeaux.archi.fr
- École nationale supérieure d’architecture et de paysage de Lille (ENSA Lille): www.lille.archi.fr
- École nationale supérieure d’architecture de Marseille (ENSAMarseille): www.marseille.archi.fr
- École d’architecture de la ville et des territoires à Marne-la-Vallée: www.marnelavallee.archi.fr
  (satellite in La Réunion: www.montpellier.archi.fr/reunion)

2 other institutions confer diplomas that are recognized as equivalent to the architecture degrees conferred by the ENSAs:


Degrees in landscape architecture

Training leading to the Diplôme de Paysagiste (DPLG), which is equivalent to a Master, is available in the Écoles Nationales Supérieures d’Architecture et de Paysage (ENSA) of Bordeaux and Lille and by the École Nationale Supérieure de Paysage in Versailles.

Admitted according to their performance on a common examination and open to holders of a 2-year national postsecondary diploma, students study for 4 years, completing a total of 2,630 hours of instruction: three years of 800 hours and a final year of individual work performed through thematic seminars (230 hours).

Holders of the DPLG perform a variety of functions—among them consulting, studies, assistance with project development, design and management, planning, teaching, and research. They may practice in a variety of settings, including independent practice (self-employment) and salaried employment in specialized private firms; local, regional, or national government; large national or international companies; and institutions of higher education.
INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

The ENSAs have maintained the tradition of the “Voyage en Italie” as one of the components of architectural education. As early as the first year in some schools, half of the class spends a semester studying abroad, with side trips interspersed with coursework in history, architectural theory, and urban studies. European exchange programs and international cooperative agreements provide academic credit for other forms of study abroad, generally in the third or fourth year of postsecondary study. Exchanges allow students to enrich their knowledge by providing opportunities to learn about other cultures and methods, as well as other architectural challenges.

Useful addresses

Academic architecture site of Lyon: www2.archi.fr/SAAL/
Académie d’architecture (academy of architecture):
www.aa.archi.fr
Admission of secondary school graduates to preparatory classes: www.admission-postbac.fr
Albums of junior architects and landscaper designers:
www.ajap.culture.gouv.fr
ArchRés, the network of libraries of French-speaking schools of architecture: http://portal.documentation.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/ArchResWiki/index.php/Accueil
Archiréseau Europe, the portal of architecture sites in Europe:
www.archiresaue.archifr.eu
Architecture and heritage database:
www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/inventai/patrimoine/
ANABF, the national association “architects of the buildings of France”:
http://anabf.archi.fr
AFHA, the French association of historians of architecture:
www.archi.fr/AFHA/
CampusArt: www.campusart.org
CRIT, the center for technical resources and information:
www.crit.archi.fr
Cité de l’Architecture et du Patrimoine (architecture and heritage city):
www.citechaillot.fr
CPEA, the conference of presidents of schools of architecture:
www.archi.fr/CPEA/
Conseil National de l’Ordre des Architectes (national council of the order of architects):
www.architectes.org
Europen France: www.archi.fr/EUROPAN-FR/
Fédération nationale des Conseils d’architecture, d’urbanisme et de l’environnement (national federation of architectural, urban, and environmental consultants):
www.fncaue.fr
Historical and artistic cities and countries:
www.culture.gouv.fr/vpah/
Les Grands Ateliers de l’Isle d’Abeau (workshops of the Isle of Abeau):
www.lesgrandsateliers.fr
La Médiathèque de l’architecture et du patrimoine (architecture and heritage media center):
www.mediathque-patrimoine.culture.gouv.fr
Ministry of Culture and Communication:
www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Disciplines-et-secteurs/Architecture
Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et de la Coopération Internationale:
www.mam.gouv.fr
Fédération nationale des Conseils d’architecture, d’urbanisme et de l’environnement (national federation of architectural, urban, and environmental consultants):
www.fncaue.fr
Historical and artistic cities and countries:
www.culture.gouv.fr/vpah/
Les Grands Ateliers de l’Isle d’Abeau (workshops of the Isle of Abeau):
www.lesgrandsateliers.fr
La Médiathèque de l’architecture et du patrimoine (architecture and heritage media center):
www.mediathque-patrimoine.culture.gouv.fr
Ministry of Culture and Communication:
www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Disciplines-et-secteurs/Architecture
Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et de la Coopération Internationale:
www.mam.gouv.fr
Network of France’s 20 Écoles Nationales Supérieures d’Architecture:
www.archi.fr/ECOLES/
Ordre des Architectes (order of architects):
www.architectes.org
Palissy (280,000 notices on French heritage objects, including 25,000 illustrated works and 5,000 files of documents):
www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/etudes-et-documentation/bases-de-donnees/palissy
Pavillon de l’Arsenal: www.pavillon-arsenal.com
Research in architecture and urban planning:
www.archi.fr/RECHERCHE/
RAMAU, network of activities and occupations in architecture and city planning:
www.ramau.archi.fr
Réseau @archi.fr, a network:
www.archi.fr
TCMH, contemporary techniques used in work on historic monuments:
www.tcmh.culture.gouv.fr
GOOD TO KNOW

- ENSA tuition for 2013–14 is €363 for the first stage of training (Licence level) and €497 for the second (Master) stage.

- The DEA (*Diplôme d’État d’Architecte*) requires 10 semesters of postsecondary study and represents 300 ECTS credits.

- Transfers into the second stage are possible upon evaluation of the application by a committee on equivalence at each school.

- A good command of French (level B2 or C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) is essential for the study of architecture in France.

- The independent professional practice of architecture is regulated by laws specific to each country.

Application on line with CampusArt

www.campusart.org

Nearly 60 schools of Art or Architecture. Nearly 200 art programs. Programs at the Licence, Master, and Doctoral levels

Prerequisites:

- At least 3 years of postsecondary study in art or architecture
- Personal website
- French language proficiency at level B2 (Common European Framework for Languages)

Campus France local offices (*Espaces Campus France*) can assist students in preparing their application.

Contact: www.campusfrance.org/en>Campus France offices around you

www.campusfrance.org/en>Find your program

A comprehensive database of degrees, specialties, and institutions in French higher education

www.campusfrance.org/en>Finance your program

CampusBourses, the directory of grant and scholarship programs