



PRESS RELEASE
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Excelia's Humacité© initiative celebrates its 20th anniversary: 20 years of students committing to social and humanitarian projects

More than 10 000 Humacité© projects have been carried out, 75% of them abroad, since the creation of this experiential educational initiative, unique of its kind in France. This flagship Excelia scheme, which is available on 100% of the school's programmes, enables students to complement their academic studies with international experience and civic actions, by carrying out projects with a strong social impact. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Humacité©, we take a look back at the achievements of an initiative that is rich in experience and a catalyst for change for students.

A pioneering experiential initiative

In 2004, well before student 'experiences' became a priority in higher education, Excelia launched Humacité©. This initiative is an innovative approach to education, enabling students to learn by experience to help them develop a greater awareness of the issues around them and cultivate the soft skills that are so vital to their future professional lives. The Humacité© initiative reflects Excelia's core values of sharing, humanity, courage, responsibility and commitment, providing each student with the chance to get involved in a social, humanitarian or civic voluntary project for a period of 6 to 8 weeks.

Strong transformative potential for students, as highlighted by an impact study

In order to demonstrate the skills contribution of Humacité©, Professors Jean-François Trinquécoste and Rémi Bréhonnet conducted an impact study of the Humacité© projects on the students. The aim of the study was to evaluate the soft skills acquired by the students according to the SEC and OCB scales, which respectively measure Social-Emotional Competencies and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour. A comparison of the SEC and OCB scores obtained by the students before and after their Humacité© project produced the following results:

- Overall self-esteem (SEC) was intrinsically higher. The SEC scale focusses on the development of social and emotional skills such as the ability to manage emotions, interpersonal relationships and to adapt to diverse social contexts.
- Openness towards others (OCB) improved, to a greater extent amongst female students than male students. The OCB scale focusses on four main dimensions: altruism, conscientiousness, civic-virtue and courtesy.

Finally, the surveys carried out as part of this study show that, once they had completed their project, students themselves felt that their skills had been strengthened, and that their autonomy and community spirit had been enhanced.

Projects primarily undertaken abroad

Three-quarters of Humacité© projects take place abroad. In 2023-2024, some 44 countries were chosen, with Africa and Asia being the most popular destinations. The remaining 25% of students discover the value of carrying out a Humacité© project in France, working with partner associations such as the *Secours Populaire*, Auxiliaries for the Blind, AFP France Handicap, *Banques Alimentaires*, *Les Restos du Cœur*, etc.

A support framework for students and a high level of satisfaction

Students benefit from personal support from Excelia in the organisation of their Humacité© project. There is a department dedicated to this, offering a vast database of host organisations whose quality and conformity with the project specifications is guaranteed. This support team provides operational assistance to students before, during and after their projects.



“We check each Humacité© agreement individually and, when the host organisation is unknown to the school, we carry out detailed checks. There are strict criteria for the approval of a project, the most important of which are safety, the nature of the work carried out by the host organisation, and the quality of the supervision provided. A Humacité© project is not about tourism, so we prepare our students for what awaits them in the field.”

Sophie Pauget, Humacité© & Climacité© Coordinator at Excelia

Surveys carried out among students show a high level of satisfaction: 83% recommend the association that hosted them and 86% see a benefit in terms of personal development. The same enthusiasm is expressed by the host associations themselves, who praise the commitment of Excelia’s students, as **Peter Thipommajan, Volunteer Coordinator of the [SAE LAO Project](#)** explains.

“It has been a privilege to welcome student volunteers from Excelia Business School to the Sae Lao Project over the past two years. The professionalism, open-mindedness and versatility of these volunteers have had a lasting positive impact on our team and the children they have worked with. We are grateful for the strong partnership with Excelia and look forward to welcoming more students in the future.”

Humacité©, a powerful project creating inspiring and sometimes unique stories

In all the feedback received, students agreed that Humacité© was a unique part of their lives, as illustrated by **Olivier Couzin, Master in Management student, Class of 2009, now Senior Internal Auditor, The Pictet Group (Luxembourg)**:

“Undertaking a Humacité© project was a unique opportunity offered by the school, a real asset for my personal development and a distinctive feature on my CV that not only attracts interest at interview but also when talking to people in my everyday life. This enriching experience enables you to draw on your soft skills and open-mindedness. It’s great that a school can offer such an initiative that has real impact; it’s an unforgettable experience and excellent preparation for the business world.”

And occasionally, a Humacité© project reveals a quite remarkable story, like that of **Ariane Carlier**, who spent 2 months in Bogota, Colombia, with the *Fundación para la Asistencia de la Niñez Abandonada*, an orphanage in which she herself had lived as an infant:

“I was adopted by this foundation when I was 2 months old. During the application process for the major business schools, I naturally chose Excelia Business School as it offered the Humacité© project. I always knew that I would return to the orphanage as a volunteer.”

HUMACITÉ©: FACTS & FIGURES

- **20** years of existence
- **More than 10 000** projects undertaken, of which 75% abroad
- Projects available on 100% of Excelia’s programmes
- **4** objectives
 - To train students to become socially responsible citizens who are aware of their duty to society
 - To develop listening skills, empathy, mutual aid, and openness to others in an unfamiliar context, whilst understanding and respecting differences
 - To learn about the realities of society and develop an understanding of how organisations work
 - To live a unique experience that will be a valuable asset when entering the world of work
- **8** areas of involvement
 - *Assisting children and young people*
 - *Providing social support and helping fight exclusion*
 - *Assisting migrants*
 - *Supporting people with disabilities*
 - *Supporting dependent persons*
 - *Providing help and guidance for vocational integration*
 - *Supporting local development projects and sustainable tourism*
 - *Ensuring public safety and protection*
- **2020:** Humacité© is the inspiration behind the launch of Climacité©

About Excelia

Excelia is one of the leading association-based French Higher Education groups. With a strong international standing, it comprises Excelia Business School, Excelia Tourism School, and Excelia Communication School. It currently educates some 6,500 students on its 4 campuses and boasts an alumni network of 45,000 graduates. It holds the following labels and accreditations: EESPIG, AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA and EFMD, as well as UNWTO.TedQual certification (United Nations) in the field of tourism.

Excelia Press Contact

Cathy Clément

GAIA Communication

Tel. +33 (0)1 30 82 66 65 - +33 (0)6 28 41 17 16

cathy.clement@gaiacommunication.fr