

Grand Prix VIE

Résidence de France, 18 octobre 2016

Good evening,

I am delighted to welcome you all to the French Residence to celebrate tonight's ceremony for the French International Business Volunteers Programme, better known as the VIE Programme.

There are over fifty VIEs here tonight, and their attendance certainly gives a youthful touch to the Residence!

I would also like to give a warm welcome to the representatives from the French subsidiaries here tonight, accompanying their VIEs.

Tonight's event, the sixth VIE Awards Ceremony, shines a spotlight on each VIE's professional and operational skills, and their ability to take on their company's projects and do their best to further its development in the United Kingdom.

International trade is an important driver to help French companies grow, particularly when they don't have the means for further expansion. Reinforcing their presence internationally can be made a lot easier by integrating the VIE programme into their HR strategy.

The VIE is a winning programme for all parties involved.

As you may know, for the young graduates following the programme, the VIE allows them to kickstart their careers. Ninety-two percent find a job straight after their contract ends, sixty-eight percent of those with the same company.

Former VIEs have significant experience and responsibility, and these are recognized by future employers. A large number of international business managers are former VIEs. Some of them are in this room!

For businesses, the programme has numerous advantages. VIEs are granted public status, and are legally employees of Business France. The programme offers a comprehensive package whereby Business France manages all the procedures, administration, salaries and social security payments for VIEs.

To highlight the importance of the VIE programme in general and to the French economy, I would like to give you a few figures:

- Sixty-two thousand young professionals between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight have taken advantage of the programme since its establishment in two-thousand-and-one, for more than six thousand companies;**
- Nine thousand two hundred VIEs are currently contracted across a hundred and thirty-two countries for nearly two thousand companies. Seventy percent of those businesses are SMEs;**
- The UK hosts nearly eight hundred VIEs, making it the fourth country of choice after the USA, Belgium, and Germany.**

Tonight's ceremony is also the perfect opportunity to bring together the UK's VIE community, who may not know each other. The UK VIE Club has also just been launched, I believe.

Finally, I would like to thank the United Kingdom French Foreign Trade Advisers committee, represented by its President,

Olivier Morel, which is an important partner in organizing tonight's awards. I will now hand over to Olivier.

Thank you, and good luck to all our VIEs!