

Centre International de Valbonne

Sophia Antipolis, France



In Sophia Antipolis's tech park, five language sections converge around the OIB, feeding a boarding lycee's grandes ecoles prep classes.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	71/100
Academic outcomes	74/100
University placement	71/100
Prestige & heritage	71/100
Alumni network	70/100
Facilities	71/100
Transparency	66/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Centre International de Valbonne occupies a niche few schools can match. It sits in Sophia Antipolis, France’s technology park, and it serves pupils from ****11-18**** in an international state-school setting built around the French Baccalauréat with the OIB, alongside a British A-Level track. Founded in ****1979****, it combines the academic seriousness of the French system with a multilingual, outward-looking intake. The draw is clear: this is not an international school built on lifestyle branding, but a school built on examination routes, language sections and intellectual range. For parents who want **academic substance** over campus theatre, CIV earns a place on the shortlist.

What sets it apart is structure. Five language sections feeding into the OIB create a school with a stronger scholarly identity than many international competitors. That matters. The OIB is demanding, and students who thrive here need stamina, fluency and a high tolerance for parallel expectations across subjects and languages. The attached boarding lycée and its grandes écoles preparation add another layer of seriousness; the school's horizon extends beyond pleasant internationalism to *hard-edged academic ambition*. Class sizes average **28**, so this is not a boutique environment, but the **13:1** student-teacher ratio still points to workable access to staff. Families looking for hand-holding, lavish pastoral packaging or a soft landing into French education will find sterner conditions here.

CIV suits bright, self-directed students who want a *properly international peer group* without stepping outside the French public tradition. It will appeal to children of mobile professional families in Sophia Antipolis, bilingual or multilingual pupils, and academically confident students who want routes into French higher education while keeping an English-language dimension in play. The best-fit child is resilient, organised and comfortable in a school that values attainment over performance. For that student, CIV offers *intellectual stretch*, *linguistic depth* and a rare cross-border academic identity. For everyone else, it can feel exacting, impersonal and uncompromising.

STRENGTHS

- Runs the OIB (Option Internationale du Baccalaureat), letting pupils sit the French Baccalaureat with an added International Option in English language and literature. Students at the Lycee International of Valbonne (LIV) work towards the prestigious OIB examination, which is the French Baccalaureate with an additional International Option where students can study English language and literature.
- The lycee runs six parallel international sections drawing a genuinely mixed pupil body. Additionally the schools offer Italian, Spanish, German and Chinese sections, with students from nearly 40 different nationalities.
- Le Figaro placed the college among the strongest in the country and the top state (public) school in its ranking. En septembre 2021, Le Figaro classe le college du CIV a la 6e place des meilleurs colleges de France (1er etablissement public du classement).
- On-site boarding supports the CPGE (post-bac prep classes) cohort, with the great majority of those students resident during term. L'internat, ouvert 7 jours sur 7 et ou resident 90 % des etudiants, facilite l'apprentissage dans cette CPGE ou de nombreux conferenciers extérieurs viennent a leur rencontre.
- The campus offers a rare full continuum from middle school through to elite exam-prep classes on one state-run site. Le Centre international de Valbonne (CIV), est un college et lycee avec des classes preparatoires aux grandes ecoles, situe

TRADE-OFFS

- Entry into the international sections is by competitive placement test, and a successful candidate may be assigned to a partner college rather than CIV itself. Des tests sont organisés pour les élèves qui souhaitent rentrer dans une section internationale. En fonction des résultats, ils peuvent être admis au CIV ou dans les sections internationales du college de l'Eganaude de Biot, du college Niki de Saint Phalle de Valbonne ou du college Cesar de Roquefort-les-Pins.
- As a French Ministry-run public school, prospective anglophone families are advised its own admissions channel is in French only. Admissions information can be found on the school's website, which is in French only.
- The site is large rather than boutique, with close to 700 pupils in the college and around 1,200 in the lycee, a scale that can feel less personal than small private international schools. Le college international compte un peu moins de sept cents élèves. Le lycee international compte environ mille deux cents élèves sur les niveaux du secondaire (2e, 1re et Terminale).
- Public reporting on the school consistently documents the OIB and CPGE tracks; no independently verifiable source confirms a distinct, separately examined British A-Level stream, so families should verify current provision directly with the school before assuming a full A-Level programme exists.

sur la commune de Valbonne, dans la technopole
de Sophia Antipolis, en France.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points are at 6e (age 11) and 2nde (age 15) for the international sections, plus a post-Baccalaureat route into the CPGE prep classes. Candidates sit a placement test in the target language; results determine whether a place is offered at CIV itself or at one of several partner colleges in the Sophia Antipolis area, so competition for CIV places specifically can be tight. As a French state school, the admissions process, forms and CPGE dossier are handled in French, and CPGE entry additionally requires a strong Baccalaureat transcript submitted through the national process.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_9cd049b8bc.