> 7th Economic Outlook Survey of the 2015 Forum des Télécommunications: has optimism returned?

A notable improvement in business prospects for French digital firms in 2015: this is what was revealed by the 7th Economic Outlook Survey* carried out by Institut Mines-Télécom's Career Observatory based on the forecasts by the 100 or so companies that attended the Forum des Télécommunications on 12th February this year, jointly organized in Paris by students from Télécom SudParis, Télécom École de Management and Télécom ParisTech.

Companies are more optimistic in their business forecasts than in 2014

88% envision good prospects for their activity for 2015, compared to 78% for 2014, an increase of 10 points in a year. In particular, this brighter outlook is shared by software publishers (+33 points), other industries (+22 points), operators (+17 points), digital services companies (+9 points) and auditing and consultancy firms (+9 points).

An optimism that correlates with recruitment prospects

In nearly all sectors a larger number of companies are forecasting an increase in recruitment: 46% of them plan to hire more people than in the previous year, an increase of 17 points in positive prospects (29% in 2014).

The digital services sector is more circumspect about recruitment than last year

Although figures are in general positive in the sector, the number of digital services companies that consider they will recruit more people has decreased by 23 points and, in contrast to 2014, some companies plan to recruit fewer people.

The sharp rise in job creations and hiring plans beyond 2015 confirm the return of confidence in the future

The share of "business development" in recruitment requirements has increased substantially, rising from 43% to 54%.

45% of companies stated that they had a hiring plan beyond 2015, which is an increase of 4 points compared to 2014.

There is a certain stability in professions corresponding to recruitment needs

Like in 2014, hiring requirements show that companies at the Forum are focusing on professions in design and the development of information technology and networks (19%), consulting (18%) and engineering (15%).

Clear growth in the need for skills in the fields of security, Big Data and the development of information technology

Three skills feature in the top positions, as usual: information technology, security and networks. However, there was a noticeably sharp rise for security (+18 points).

Lower down in the ranking are two other skills that were mentioned more frequently than last year: internet and multimedia technologies (+ 6 points) and mobile technologies (+ 4 points).
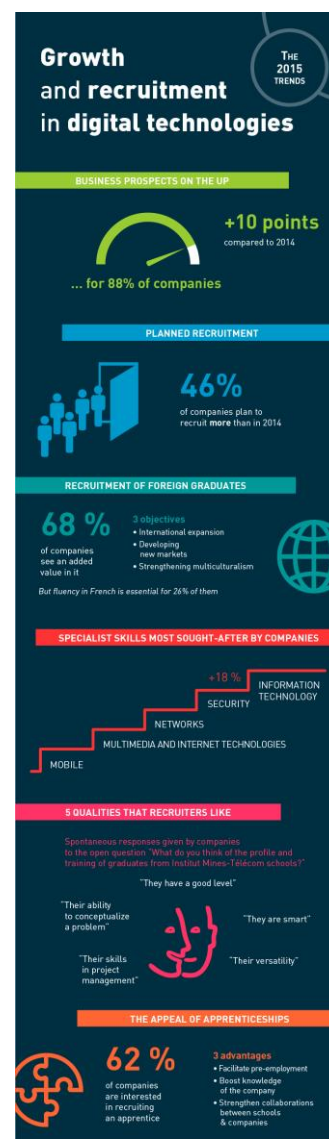
All these increases are mainly driven by software publishers and non-IT industries.
Several skills were mentioned spontaneously by companies: 11% mentioned Big Data, 7% the development of information technology and 3.5% finance.

Companies are worried about a shortage of engineers with the "right profile" on the job market
Skills in security, big data and development of information technology are considered rare and are therefore highly sought-after, with "coders who are able to solve problems and have an overall vision in order to progress as a project manager" being particularly prominent. Companies struggle to win the loyalty of such people, who change jobs often. Because of the economic upturn, graduates who are considered to have "good potential" by companies receive 4 or 5 job offers, whereas a year ago they only had 2 or 3.

The survey has provided information on two specific topics:

- 62% of companies expressed a positive opinion on the training of engineers through apprenticeships
Companies that already have experience in this respect are generally very satisfied and often hope to increase the number of their apprentices. However, for companies that operate in project mode, working patterns often prove to be a hindrance: the student's regular absence poses a problem in terms of project management or because their presence is required for certain clients.
- 68% of companies have a positive view of the recruitment of foreign graduates
They have a real advantage when the company works internationally and is seeking to develop new markets abroad. The diversity of cultures becomes an asset and proof of open-mindedness. However, fluency in French remains an essential requirement for all applicants, and especially for those who will be dealing directly with clients.

Companies want more high-level graduates. They are **generally very satisfied with students from Institut Mines-Télécom graduate schools**, who are "smart", have a "consistently good level" and a keen ability to conceptualize problems. Their profiles are "versatile and attractive". The dual technical/project management skills are strongly appreciated.

A survey carried out during the Forum since 2009
The Forum des Télécommunications allows students to meet each other and a hundred or so companies from a wide range of sectors (new technologies, banking, insurance, auditing, consultancy, automotive, etc.) with recruitment needs in terms of engineering graduates, either for job positions or work placements. Since 2009 the Careers Observatory has been carrying out an Economic Outlook Survey on the companies in attendance in order to identify the current year's trends.

View the survey on the Institut Mines-Télécom Careers Observatory website
http://metiers.wp.mines-telecom.fr/2015/03/13/7eme-enquete-conjoncture-du-forum-des-telecommunications-2015-loptimisme-retrouve/

About Institut Mines-Télécom www.mines-telecom.fr
Institut Mines-Télécom is a public institution dedicated to higher education, research and innovation in the fields of engineering and digital technologies. It encompasses 10 "Mines" and "Télécom" graduate schools under the aegis of the Minister for Industry and Digital Technologies, 2 subsidiary schools, 2 strategic partner institutions, and a network of 13 associate schools. Institut Mines-Télécom has earned national and international recognition for the outstanding quality of its training for engineers, managers and PhD holders, its research and its innovation activity.
Institut Mines-Télécom is a member of a number of national research programming alliances: Allistene, Aviesan and Athena. It maintains close relations with the business world and has two Carnot Institutes. Around a hundred start-ups leave its incubators each year.