

Quarterly  
Newsletter  
Issue 2  
2020



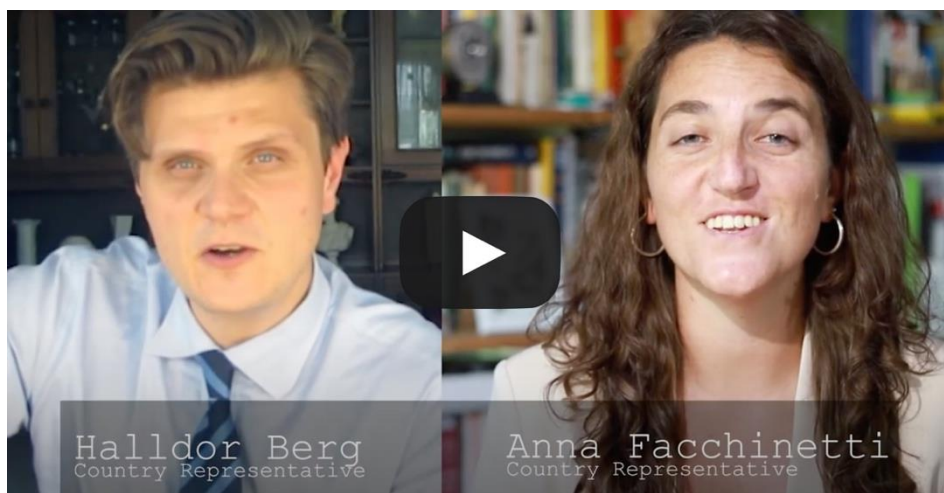
euraxess  
RESEARCHERS IN MOTION

This newsletter is for you! Via [china@euraxess.net](mailto:china@euraxess.net), you can send us any **comments, contributions** or **suggestions**.

To become a **member** of EURAXESS, you can **sign up** [here](#). You can also follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Weibo and WeChat.



## EURAXESS China



Welcome to our first video newsletter!

The outbreak of Covid-19 has had an unexpected and deep impact on international research collaboration and researcher mobility in 2020. We know that many people in the field of Sino-European researcher mobility have been uprooted, and their work severely affected. This is the same for EURAXESS China – it is difficult to facilitate networking and the connection of Chinese and European researchers when all physical events are out of the picture and travel is limited.

We still believe it is a very important job, maybe now more than ever. In our webinar on European Covid-19 funding we reported many excellent success stories about research projects aimed at combatting the virus, which benefited from very rapid funding from the EU, and are already showing positive results. At least four of them included Chinese partners.

We have searched far and wide to try to find innovative ways to achieve this, despite the situation. In this quarterly newsletter you will see some of the outcomes. For the first time we experimented with organising webinars, and enjoyed great success, in this quarter a series of 4 webinars attracted more than 500 participants. We also broke the mould and experimented with organising a Virtual Reality Researchers' Night, as can be seen below.

We haven't stopped innovating – this edition of the EURAXESS China quarterly newsletter marks our first video newsletter. We really hope that this format will make the content and information we are sharing more accessible and informative for our members. In addition to the aforementioned topics we will put focus on the EURAXESS Country of France!



# EURAXESS China Virtual Reality Researchers' Night

## What is the future of researcher mobility?

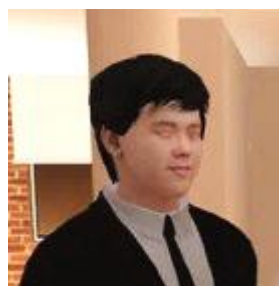
The first virtual reality (VR) EURAXESS event was organised by EURAXESS China on 2 July 2020. The event took the form of a EURAXESS Researchers' Night, and aimed at creating a relaxed atmosphere to encourage networking between researchers.

Inspired by the format of the event, the topic of discussion during the event was *The Future of Researcher Mobility*. The discussion on the topic was carried out in two different groups, followed by a final group session.

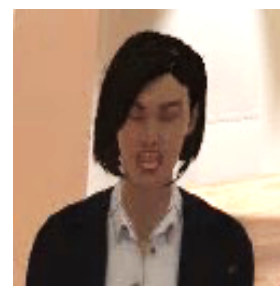
## What did the participants think?



VR avatar of Jane Wu, Shanghai Association for Science and Technology



VR avatar of Kai He, PhD student at Leeds University



VR avatar of Sophie Kuang, assoc. professor at Shanghai Polytechnic University

Different technologies and the methods that accompany them are very promising but they are not the most important thing about researcher mobility.

What matters more is how researchers can find the right partners, on what foundation they can make new partners, and how they can create trust between each other.

VR technologies will continue to spread and improve, and will surely serve a purpose in the future of researcher mobility.

However, they are not able to completely replace a physical meeting in terms of the quality and level of interactions. The future will be a combination of VR and physical meetings.

Although VR technology is undoubtedly the future, it is still in the very early stages of development and has a long way to go.

Furthermore, physical meetings between people are always the most important. Being able to see each other's faces, look at body language and all that, is the foundation of communications.

*The main advantages of using*

# Virtual Reality



01



## Networking in 3D

Networking and making new connections happens in 3D, you can approach people organically, talk to the person next to you, work in clusters and move around.

## More normal human interaction

It's getting better at replicating human interaction: you can look at the person talking, use gestures and other things essential to communication.



02

03



## Make new people meet

VR makes it possible for people to meet that usually couldn't due to distance and other constraints. It can be easily combined with Researchers' Nights

## Less human and environmental cost

Like video calls, VR removes a lot of the human and environmental costs of travelling, but unlike video you don't sacrifice the networking effect.



04



### **Do you want to join us in VR?**

Become a member of EURAXESS China today and we will let you know when our next Virtual Reality event will take place. We are looking forward to seeing you in VR!



# Video recordings of the EURAXESS China webinars

**Did you miss one? Watch the videos below**

## How to Get Marie Curie Individual Fellowships

*6 May 2020, 16:00 Beijing time*

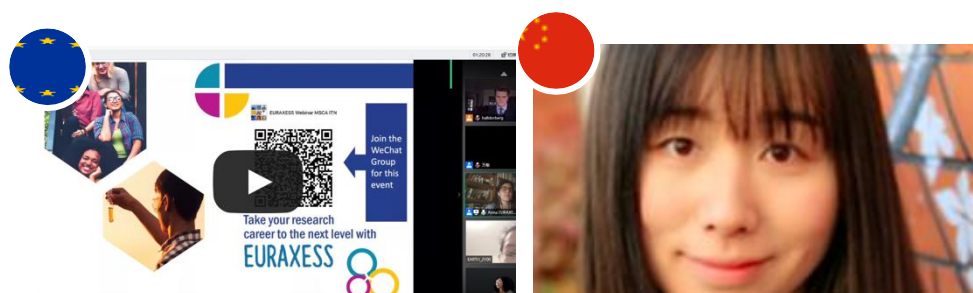
The two-hour event included an overview about the European Research Area (ERA), a presentation of the fellowships offered by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) to individual researchers, the requirements for applicants, how to prepare the applications, and who to refer to for additional support. It was followed by testimony from Dr Huang He, MSCA Fellow at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, who shared insights from his experiences both as an applicant and as a researcher living and working in Germany.



## MSCA Innovative Training Networks and How to Find PhD Positions in Europe

*21 May 2020, 16:00 Beijing time*

The topic was approached from the perspective of individual researchers looking to apply for positions offered by Innovative Training Networks (ITNs), including how to search PhD opportunities on the EURAXESS Portal. The event began with a presentation on ITNs and the positions that are offered, followed by a presentation by Min Wan, a Chinese PhD student who shared her experience of an ITN at University College Dublin. It concluded with a walkthrough on how to use EURAXESS Jobs to find PhD opportunities in Europe.



## Covid-19 Research Opportunities in Europe

29 May 2020, 16:00 Beijing time

This was about funding opportunities for researchers doing work related to Covid-19. The event focused on Horizon 2020, and examined the first call (that took place in January) and the second call for an expression of interest (which was then opened for applications). The webinar also looked at related funding opportunities from Member States and Associated Countries of the European Union. The event was organised in cooperation with ENRICH in China and Richard Deng, the Chief Representative of ENRICH in China, introduced their services.



Join the more than 500 researchers who took part in our first series of webinars.

Many more to come in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter!

To be always updated on the upcoming events become a member of EURAXESS China [here](#).

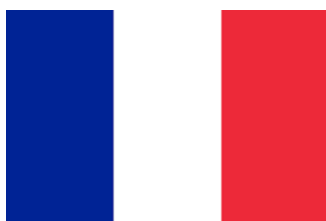
## How to Bridge Research and Innovation

24 June 2020, 16:00 Beijing time

In this webinar EURAXESS China teamed up with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the Association of Chinese-European Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The event started with an introduction to EU-funded innovation support tools for researchers, and was followed by a presentation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and its activities. The third speaker offered information on Chinese-funded support tools for innovators. The webinar also looked at related funding opportunities and support tools from Member States and Associated Countries of the EU.



# EURAXESS members in focus: France – A decade of change



With a total of 63 Nobel Prizes and 16 Field Medals, France is a country recognised for the excellence of its scientific research. Among the most recent winners are Esther Duflo (Economy) in 2019, Gérard Mourou (Physics) in 2018 and Jean-Pierre Sauvage (Chemistry) in 2016.



EURAXESS – *Researchers in Motion* is an initiative of the ERA that addresses barriers to researcher mobility and seeks to enhance the career development of researchers. This pan-European effort is currently supported by 42 countries, each of which will be profiled in our quarterly e-newsletters.

France ranks sixth in terms of its world share of scientific publications and fourth in the European patent system. It is very active in the fields of transport technologies, other special machines, mechanical components, and chemistry, as well as nuclear technology and space research. It is also third in terms of countries that are beneficiaries of the contributions allocated by the European Commission through the Horizon 2020 framework programme for research and innovation.

## Research and Development in France

In France, it is the [Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Innovation \(MESRI\)](#), which designs, develops and implements the national research and innovation agenda.

To meet scientific, technological, environmental and societal challenges, a national research strategy has been in place since 2013, which is in keeping with European orientations on these issues. The strategy is revised every five years under the guidance of the minister in charge of research and innovation. Its objective is to maintain a high-level commitment to basic, curiosity-driven research while establishing a level playing field for other stakeholders at national, regional and local levels, such as the industrial sector and businesses, civil society and lawmakers.

A large part of French public research is carried out in higher education institutions. Its organisation relies principally on a two-tier system, with universities on one side and national research organisations on the other. Collaboration between the two kinds of entities is achieved in 'mixed research

units' (UMR), i.e. laboratories whose management and monitoring is shared by one or more organisations and/or universities.

Research is also extensively carried out by private companies. Out of the 300 000 researchers in France, 62% are privately employed. The sectors employing the most researchers are: IT, the automobile industry, aeronautics and space technology, publishing, film and broadcasting. Domestic spending on research and development in France amounted to EUR 50.6 billion in 2017. This represented 2.21% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), placing France in fifth place among all OECD countries.

### **Entrepreneurship and Innovation**

Over the past decade, higher education and research institutions have expanded their programmes to encourage entrepreneurship stemming from public research and innovation. A large number of measures and incentives have been set up, in particular through the Investments for the Future Programme (PIA). With EUR 57 billion at its disposal, the programme is designed to help France face the challenges of tomorrow (competitiveness, environment, health, etc.) and to increase its growth potential by investing in higher education and training, research, industry and SMEs, sustainable development and digitisation.

### **Funding and Recruitment Opportunities**

#### Research funding

Block funding to research laboratories is jointly allocated by universities and public research organisations, while project-based research is mostly funded through independent agencies, such as the National Research Agency (ANR). The ANR supports research projects selected through a competitive peer-reviewed process. In 2018, 1 471 projects were funded, at an average of EUR 350 000 per project.



Private research is first and foremost funded by Bpifrance, a public investment bank supporting state and regional policy aimed at developing and strengthening the R&D actions carried out by SMEs.

Two more mechanisms specifically targeted at research and innovation include:

#### **Basic Facts**

**Capital**  
Paris

**Major cities**  
Bordeaux, Grenoble, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, Nantes, Nice, Rennes, Strasbourg, Toulouse

**Language**  
Français

**Political system**  
Republic

**Currency**  
Euro

**Area**  
244,340 sq mi (632 834 km<sup>2</sup>),  
213,010 sq mi (551 695 km<sup>2</sup>) of  
which are considered  
metropolitan France

[Promotional page about France](#)

[EURAXESS France](#)

[CPU - The Conference of University Presidents](#)



- CIFRE contracts, which allow a company to benefit from financial aid in order to hire a doctoral student under a three-year contract.
- The research tax credit, which enables companies to claim refunds of up to 60% of their initial investments if they hire early-career researchers.

### Recruitment opportunities

Several specialised resources help researchers identify research jobs and research scholarships for their stay in France:

- [EURAXESS Jobs](#), the European portal (click on France)
- [ABG](#)
- [Campus France's grant search engine](#), listing all the grants and scholarship programmes available from national institutions, local governments, corporations, foundations and institutions of higher education.



### **Important Information for Incoming Researchers**

The 42 EURAXESS Centres, coordinated by the CPU, involve about 130 people working on a daily basis, in their universities or research organisations, to help international researchers arriving in France and to support them during their stay (and after).

In particular, they offer free and personalised assistance to them, and their families, in order to:

- **prepare their stay** – assistance on entry, residence and work procedures (visas, work permits, residency permits, etc.);
- **help them settle in** – assistance in finding accommodation, healthcare coverage, bank account, etc.;
- **help them with daily administrative procedures** – registering for social security, family benefits, taxes, pensions, etc.;
- **facilitate integration** – French language classes, cultural activities, sports, babysitting and schooling, etc.

More than 60 000 researchers from some 144 different countries have already benefited from the services of the EURAXESS France network.

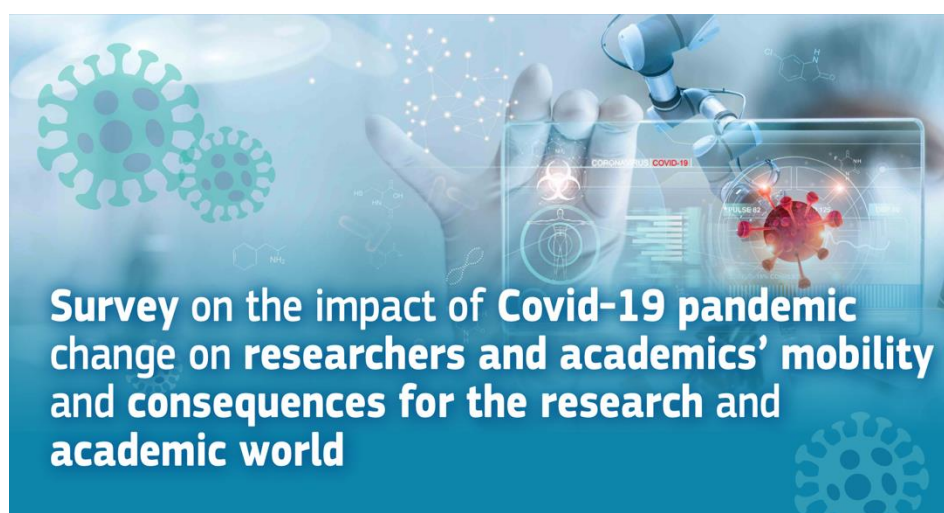
EURAXESS Centres are distributed across the whole French territory: find your nearest [EURAXESS Centre here](#).

### **EU Council Presidency**

France will be holding the EU Council presidency from January to June 2022.



# HOT TOPIC: Covid-19 will have a huge impact on researcher mobility and the academic world – but how exactly?



Covid-19, the pandemic that has ravaged the world for most of 2020, continues to take a massive toll on lives, health systems, economies and society in general. It also has a huge impact on researchers – their physical mobility, the way they work, and how they interact and cooperate through international research networks.

Restrictions on travel and social interactions, which hinder movement within and between countries, make conference participation impossible, thwart international research cooperation, and prevent researchers from visiting partner institutions or working and conducting research in them.

A lot has been written about the effects of these trends on academic teaching. We know that universities have moved towards online classes and are preparing for much-reduced enrolments for the upcoming academic year, especially from foreign students. According to one study, some 36% of students are considering changing their study plans.

But much less is known so far about Covid-19's impact on research, the other side of academia. Research priorities are changing and research budgets have been reallocated. Many people interested in research positions abroad are reconsidering their plans because of travel restrictions, financial uncertainties and other pressures. A lot of uncertainty remains. Researchers are asking themselves questions like: *How can I carry out research and cooperate with my international peers under the new conditions? Can I still research abroad under these circumstances? Should I postpone it? Should I abandon it?* Research institutes and universities are asking: *How should we prepare for the emerging new research context? Do we need new online research collaboration tools? How can*



Visit our [dedicated page](#) on the portal to stay updated about the survey on researcher mobility

*we maintain our research excellence? Can we host guest researchers under these circumstances?*

Nobody has answers to these questions at the moment, but researchers around the world are working hard to try and find them. To support and accelerate this process, EURAXESS will carry out a global survey to collect information about current thinking around these issues and the most recent innovative ideas for solutions.

This survey will also explore how changes related to Covid-19 are affecting researcher/academic mobility, especially EU-centric mobility, as well as the potential wider consequences for the research and academic world – financial effects, research output and quality, career qualifications, hosting dynamics, etc. The survey results will provide researchers with concrete information for their work and career agendas, and create valuable insights for policymakers.

With members in some 40 European countries and in all major regions of the world, the EURAXESS network is uniquely placed to conduct this representative survey. As a first step, the survey will collect information from researchers about their situations and perceptions, and the prospects for international mobility in the days of Covid-19. Following this, a complementary survey of universities, research institutions and research policymakers will explore the possibilities and prospects of hosting international researchers and fostering research mobility under the new conditions. The results will help researchers to re-shape their international collaboration and mobility plans, and support host institutions and policymakers in formulating new strategies and policies to maintain international researcher mobility.

For more information, please contact [survey@euraxess.net](mailto:survey@euraxess.net) with your queries or ideas.

## State of affairs: mobility to and from China



[Re-open EU](#): easily discover the travel restrictions in the EU Member States of your destination

The outbreak of COVID-19 has affected the life and work of many researchers all around the world. Numerous European researchers that were based in China before the beginning of the pandemic are looking for ways to return to their lives. Likewise, there are many Chinese grant holders planning to move to Europe whose departures have been postponed by the restrictions on mobility. On top of this, the decision of the Chinese government to temporarily suspend entry to the mainland for foreign nationals holding visas or residence permits issued after 28 March 2020, is also complicating the whole situation.

**Are you a European researcher trying to return to China, or a Chinese researcher about to move to Europe?** In this article, we have collected some useful information about the state of affairs regarding mobility to and from China for researchers who have been stuck due to travel restrictions.

All non-Chinese individuals willing to travel to China need to hold a visa issued after 28 March 2020, and to apply under the relevant category (economic, trade, scientific or technological activities, or emergency humanitarian needs) at the Chinese Embassies and Consulates in their countries. Regulations that come into



Coronavirus: information for the MSCA Community

effect after arrival are subject to constant updates and may differ due to specific policies introduced by the different Chinese regions and municipalities, but a common element is a nucleic acid test (NAT) and a 14-day quarantine in designated places for medical observation at the passenger's expense.

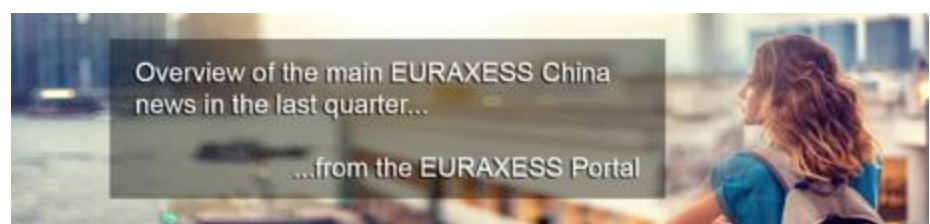
The Civil Aviation Administration of China, China's top civil aviation regulator, started increasing the number of flights from certain countries in June and established '**green channels**' for passenger airline flights to airports in the Chinese mainland from eight countries, including Germany, France, Italy, the UK and Switzerland.

Since the last week of June, the first flights carrying EU nationals have brought a few hundred businessmen back to China, demonstrating an easing of the travel restrictions as the Covid-19 pandemic seems to ebb there. The return flights have been organised by EU national governments in collaboration with the relevant Chambers of Commerce and international or Chinese airlines.

Chinese universities and research entities are waiting for the central government to issue new regulations regarding foreign researchers so that they can release and renew the relevant visas.

From 1 July, some EU Member States started lifting restrictions on non-essential travel into the EU for residents of third countries, including China. If you are looking to travel in the EU, the **Re-open EU web platform** is a useful resource. It contains real-time information on borders, and the means of transport and tourism services available. MSCA Fellows can check out all the news related to the Covid-19 crisis on the specific page on the European Commission website [here](#).

## In case you missed it...



### CORRECTION

In a Flash Note on 25 July 2020 sent to the EURAXESS China network the title of one of the news indicated that the link was to a EU-China China Summit Joint Statement. No such statement came out of the summit, in actuality the headline linked to the press release by President Michel and President von der Leyen

The European Union and China held their 22<sup>nd</sup> bilateral Summit on 22 June 2020.

In a significant passage, President von der Leyen said: *The COVID-pandemic and a number of major bilateral and multilateral challenges show clearly the EU-China partnership is crucial, be it in terms of trade, climate, technology, and the defence of multilateralism. But for our relations to develop further, they must become more rules-based and reciprocal, in order to achieve a real level playing-field.*

To see the whole press release by President Michel and President von der Leyen please follow this link: [EU-China Summit Press Release](#).



## Researchers in Innovation and Industry

In this quarter we decided to focus on how to connect research and innovation. See some of our articles on the topic below:



### Innovation Funding: European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT)

The focus EURAXESS China this week is innovation funding. If you would like to learn more join our webinar on 24 June where you will find a presentation from the EIT. **REGISTER** The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) was created by the EU in 2008 to power Europe's ability to innovate by tackling global challenges. The EIT is the only EU initiative to bring business, education and research organisations together across...



### International High-level Talents Innovation and Entrepreneurship Contest - Jinan

International High-level Talents Innovation and Entrepreneurship Contest in Jinan aims to attract talents, entrepreneurs, professors and academicians. The European region of the competition is sponsored by Jinan Association for Science and Technology and Association of Chinese-European Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ACEIE). International innovative and entrepreneurial talents (teams) are welcome to participate in the competition and are...



### Innovation Funding: France

This focus EURAXESS China this week is innovation funding. If you would like to learn more join our webinar on 24 June **REGISTER** **BOURSE FRENCH TECH** To encourage entrepreneurs to take the leap, spread their wings and fly, Bourse French Tech offers up to €90,000 in equity-free funding to help pay for those initial startup costs. **OVERVIEW** Going from concept to fully fledged company is never easy. Bourse French Tech...



### Innovation Funding: Enhanced European Innovation Council (EIC) pilot

The focus EURAXESS China this week is innovation funding. If you would like to learn more join our webinar on 24 June **REGISTER** The Enhanced EIC pilot supports top-class innovators, entrepreneurs, small companies and scientists with bright ideas and the ambition to scale up internationally. It brings together the parts of Horizon 2020 that provide funding, advice and networking opportunities for those at cutting edge of innovation. How to...



### Innovation Funding: Denmark's Innobooster

The focus EURAXESS China this week is innovation funding. If you would like to learn more join our webinar on 24 June **REGISTER** The Innovation Fund participates in several strategically selected international programs and schemes aimed at promoting Danish engagement in international research and innovation. It offers different programmes to those looking to apply for an investment to develop an idea including also...

## About us

EURAXESS China is a networking tool for European researchers active in China and for Chinese and international researchers wishing to collaborate and/or pursue a career in Europe. EURAXESS China provides information about research in Europe, European research policy, opportunities for research funding, for EU-China and international collaboration and for trans-national mobility. **Membership is free.**

Visit us at [china.euraxess.org](http://china.euraxess.org) and [join](#) the EURAXESS China community.

EURAXESS Worldwide has dedicated teams ready to assist you in the following countries and regions: ASEAN (focused on Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam), Australia and New Zealand, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC – focused on Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Colombia), China, India, Japan, South Korea, and North America (the USA and Canada).

