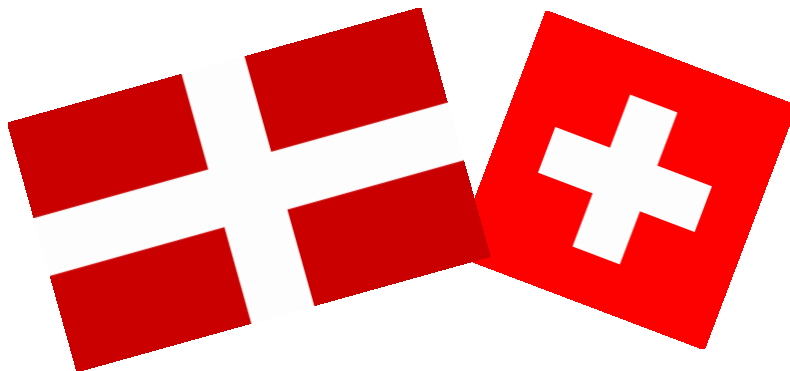


# ACEEPT 2015 – CHAMBÉRY

## PRE-TASK 3

HOW IS THE SAVOIE MONT-BLANC REGION PERCEIVED BY SWISS STUDENTS AS A TOURISM DESTINATION?



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Swiss team from the HES-SO Valais Tourism is pleased to present you its analysis about how the region of “Savoie Mont Blanc” is perceived in Switzerland.

Asked to target a particular segment of the population, we chose the one that we could reach the most efficiently. We created a survey that we sent to all our acquaintances and other reachable students and received more than 400 responses. On the base of these answers, we came out with interesting results that we are going to share with you in this report.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

With the team of pre-task 3, we decided to target the Swiss students from 18 to 30 years old, in order to discover their knowledge about “Savoie Mont-Blanc” and their intention to visit this destination.

Since Switzerland is a country that is composed of three major linguistic regions (German, French and Italian), we were interested to see the differences between them. Unfortunately, since our school is located in Sierre, in the French part of Switzerland we have a large majority of French speaking people.

We built the survey ourselves using the software “Sphinx” and we separated it in 4 parts:

- general knowledge
- knowledge about the region of “Savoie Mont Blanc”
- experiences (if they had already visited the region)
- personal information

Then, we translated it in the 3 languages and we did a pre-test in our team to assess the questions and see if they were any problems. Once this step of the process was completed, we posted it online and sent it in our school and to our student’s friends.

After 6 days, we managed to collect 512 answers, representing 450 students (about 25% response rate).

## 3. HYPOTHESIS

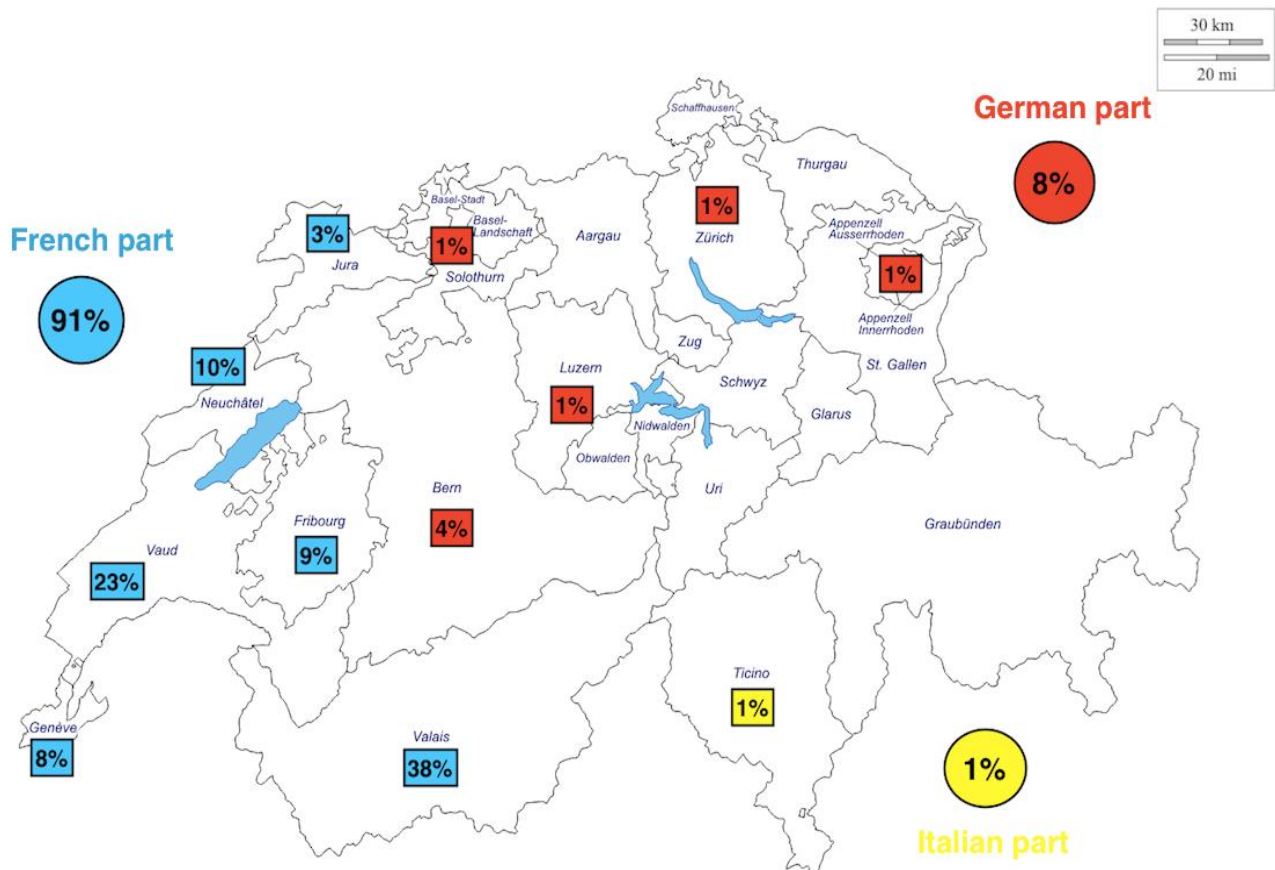
Firstly, we had in mind to interview only Swiss people (German, Italian and French speaking part). And even though we knew that we would have more answers from the French part, we were surprised to see how few answers came back from the German and Italian speaking parts.

Secondly, we thought that we would have more specific and correct answers from the French part, because geographically they are closer to the region “Savoie Mont-Blanc”. Some French speaking people live near the borderline and it only takes a couple of hours to reach this destination. So it is easier to visit this region in a day, compare to German and Italian speakers who have to travel more than 4-5 hours.

## 4. ANALYSIS

After the collect of the 448 questionnaires from students of various field of study, we can see that the tourism's students are preponderant with 37%.

We can see that there is more women (63%), than men (37%) but there is no big differences in their answers and their vision about the region is the same.



As said before, Switzerland is split in 3 major linguistic regions. Here you can see the map of our country with the response rate per canton/region.

How you can see on the map, the cantons of Valais and Vaud (French speaking region) are the most represented. This is why we have only studied this two in particular. Furthermore, these regions have also a lot of mountains.

For the Canton of Valais (38% of the total):

- 33% of the respondents have already been in “Savoie” for winter sports or visits.
- 99% ski in one of the local ski resort

For the Canton of Vaud (23% of the total):

- 26% of the respondents have already been in “Savoie” for winter sports or visits.
- 84% ski in Valais and 68% is also skiing in Vaud

Finally, we also analysed answers coming from the Canton of Geneva (8% of the total), because it is the closest region to “Savoie Mont-Blanc”. Here we can see some big differences with others cantons:

- 40% of the respondents from Geneva have already been in France for winter holidays (Chamonix, Avoriaz, Porte du Soleil, Morzine, Châtel, etc.), against only 14% of other Swiss respondents.
- 61% of the respondents have already been in Savoie in general, against 29% for Switzerland.

In general:

- 13 % of the German speaking have already visited the “Savoie”
- 30% of all the students have already visited the “Savoie”
- 72% of the German go in the Canton of Valais for skiing, 65% near Bern and 40% in Grisons

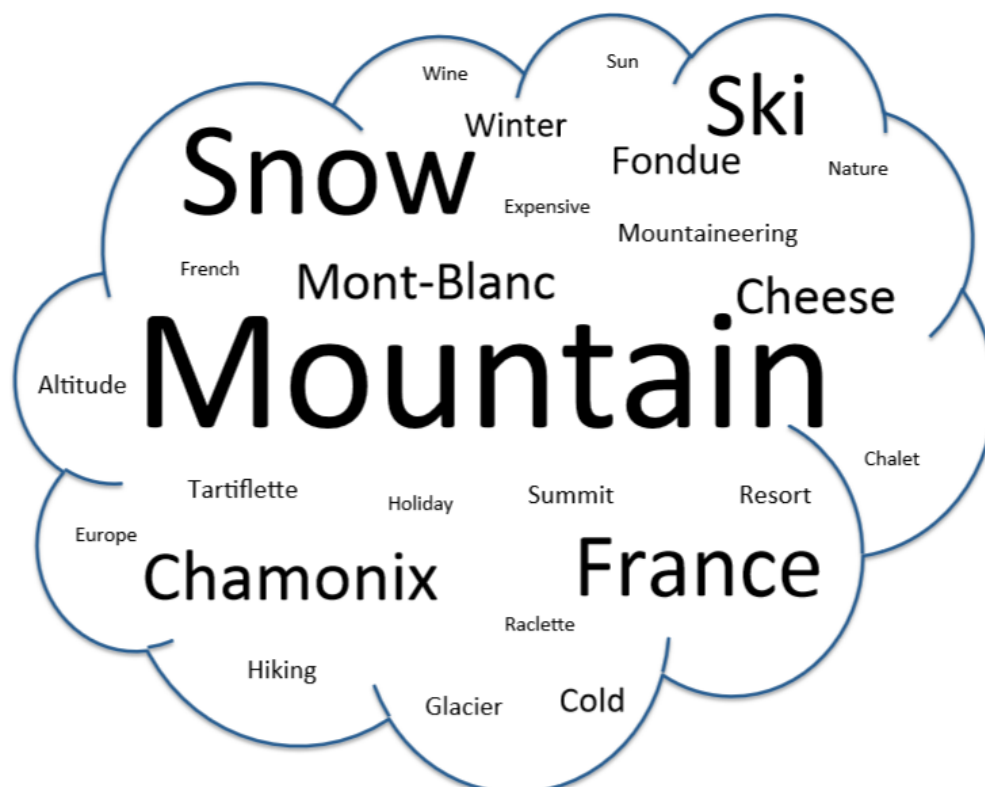
We can observe major differences between these regions: the closest they live to the French border the more they cross it. Furthermore, people who live near winter resorts prefer to stay in their area.

#### 4.1 KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE REGION OF “SAVOIE MONT-BLANC”

We thought that the best way to discover their own knowledge about this region was to let them answer an open question. Therefore, they had to write down the first 3 words that came to their mind when they see the phrase “Savoie Mont-Blanc”.

With this question, we could note two interesting things. The first one, is that for the French part and the German part of Switzerland the top 3 of the listed-words were the same: “mountain”, “snow” and “France”. The second one, is the fact that almost all the Swiss students have heard of this region.

Below, you can see the words that came up at this question:

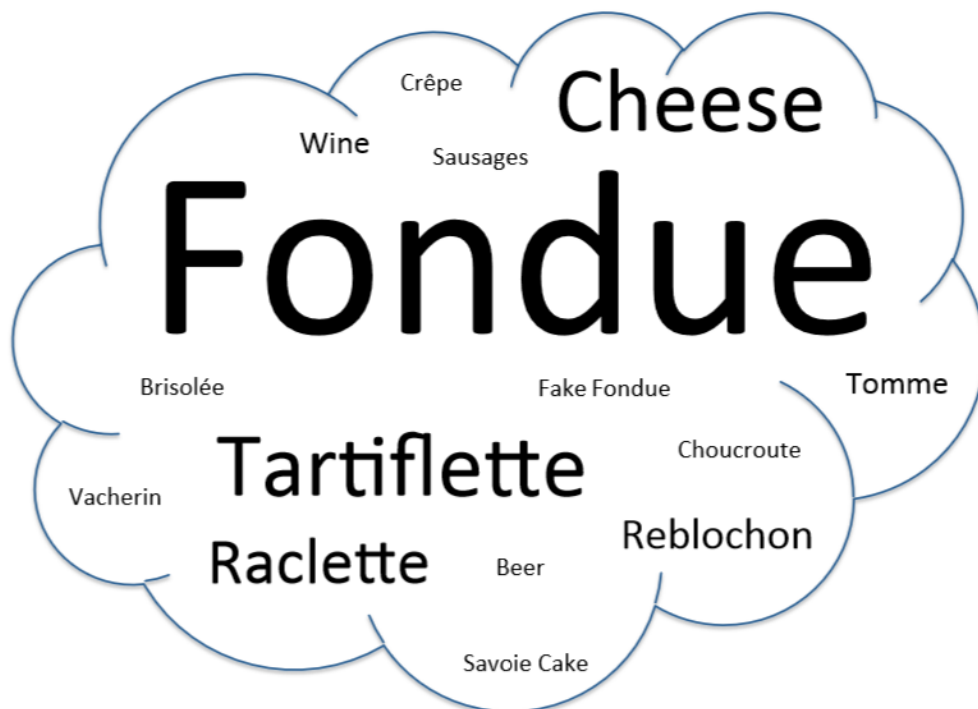


The size of the word correspond to the number of occurrence. The larger it is, the more often it has been quoted. For example, “mountain” was given at 50%, “snow” at 40% and “cheese” at 10%.

Subsequently, we were curious to see if they also knew the culinary specialties of the region of “Savoie Mont-Blanc”. Therefore, we asked them to write down what they thought about their local specialties.

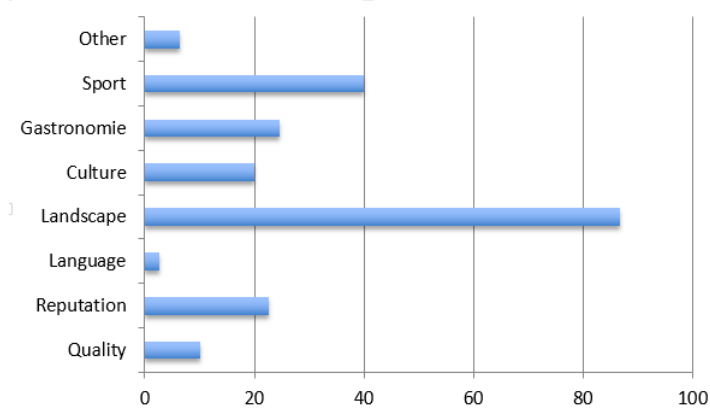
We could notice that the answers weren’t the same for everyone. Especially for the German speaking part of Switzerland, which has almost no idea about the culinary specialties of “Savoie Mont-Blanc”, with the exception of “fondue” that 25% of them quoted. However, the French speaking part knows the famous specialties of the region, even if some proposals are weird and funny.

Below, you can see the words that came up at this question:



Like before, the size of the word correspond at the number of occurrence. Here, “fondue” was given at 40%, “tartiflette” and “fromage” were given at 15%.

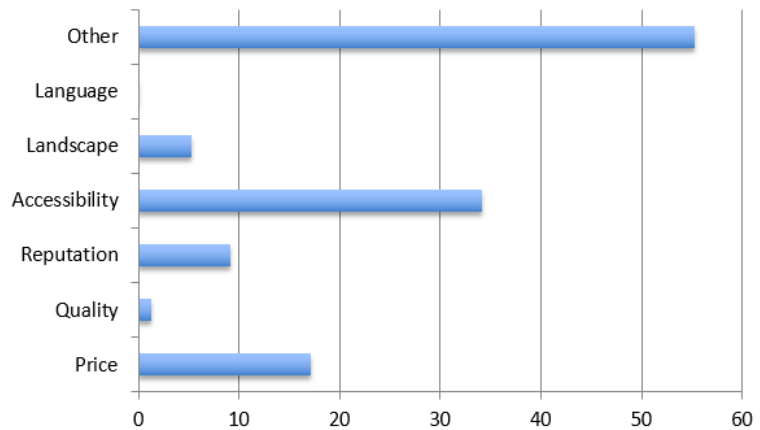
Afterwards, we asked them if they would be interesting in visiting the region “Savoie Mont-Blanc”. We could observe that 75% would be thrilled to visit it.



The main reasons why they would like to visit this region is the landscape at 87%, followed by doing sport at 41% and gastronomy at 25%.

At the opposite side, the motive of why they wouldn't go in “Savoie Mont-Blanc” is due to the accessibility (34%) and the price (17%).

But it was also a question of time and interest.



## 4.2. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND “SAVOIE MONT-BLANC”

France is geographically close to Switzerland, as a consequence there are a lot of similarities between them. One of them concerns the culinary specialities. The “fondue” is the most quoted culinary specialties, as it is in Switzerland.

Moreover the words “cheese” and “raclette” come repetitively to describe specialties. In opposition, the “tartiflette” is specific of the region. Secondly, our landscape look alike. We also have mountains, winter resorts where people can ski, snowboard and hike. Thirdly, the French language is also a factor of similarities between the French part of Switzerland and France, what makes the destination more approachable.

## 5. CONCLUSION

To conclude we can see that “Savoie Mont-Blanc” is rather well known by the Swiss students. Even if we can observe that German speakers visit less the region than French speakers, it seems that they know the region as well. Geneva came up as the region who knows and goes the most to “Savoie Mont-Blanc”, due to the geographic situation, compare to others inhabitants who stay more in Switzerland.

However despite the fact that Swiss people prefer to stay in Switzerland, they show a great interest in visiting the region of “Savoie Mont-Blanc” someday. Indeed three quarters of the respondents would be motivated to go there for the landscapes, sports and gastronomy. Like we said before the region is really similar to Switzerland and that seems to be an obstacle.

Therefore, the Swiss Team thinks that if the region of “Savoie Mont-Blanc” wants to attract more Swiss people, they should make specific and more attractive offers for our country. Mostly because France is cheaper than Switzerland and it is a great advantage for the region. Consequently, the region could offer various packages (one night in a hotel with a day-pass for the ski or transport from Switzerland with a day-pass for the ski for example).