

THE

EXCHANGE STUDENT HANDBOOK



PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR YOUR STAY



SUMMARY

Visa	3
Health	4
Accommodation	6
Cost of living in France	7
Mobile phone providers	8
Embassies and consulates	8
Banking	9
Post office	9
Jobs and volunteers	10
Support from students' organizations	10-11
Discover France and Europe	12
In case of emergency	13

1. VISA

Depending on the length of your studies and your nationality, you may need a [visa](#) to study in France.

○ If you are from an EU country

A valid identity card or passport is all you need to study in France.

○ If you are not from the EU

Visit the website [France-Visa](#) to check if you need a visa. Most of the time, if you study in France for a period of four months to one year, you will get a **long-stay visa valid as a residence permit** named [VLS-TS](#). It must be validated upon your [arrival in France](#).

For any additional information concerning your VISA (EEF number,...) please contact Campus France in your country.

Important: As soon as you arrive in France and within the first 3 months, you must validate your VLS-TS on this [official website](#).

With a VLS-TS, you are allowed to work part-time in France (*see p. 10*).



2. HEALTH

Before your arrival in France, you are required to send the following documents at incoming@reseau-cd.fr

- A copy of your International Health Insurance Certificate for repatriation, civil liability and extra medical cost.
- A declaration of International Insurance completed and signed (the Exchange & Study Abroad Department emailed it to you).
- **EU students:** a valid copy of your European Health Insurance Card
- **Non-EU students:** you must register for the French Health Scheme (named *Sécurité Sociale*). This can be done upon your arrival. It is free but mandatory. Please register at etudiant-etranger.ameli.fr (English website) and send us your registration certificate.

Important: Please note that these documents are mandatory. You will not be able to get your Student card if you did not provide them.



The French National Health Scheme

In France, the National Health Scheme (named *Sécurité Sociale*) reimburses your medical expenses if you are ill, injured or hospitalized.

When to apply for *Sécurité Sociale*?

Upon your arrival in France, and after receiving your school registration certificate.

How to apply for *Sécurité Sociale*?

To complete your registration online, you will have to upload several [official documents](#) and a bank account statement - IBAN (you **do not need** to have a French bank account).



Watch this video about the procedure to [register for *Sécurité Sociale*](#)



Watch this [video](#) to know everything you need about the Assurance Maladie.

Watch this [video](#) to know how does the Assurance Maladie (health insurance) work in France.

Applying for Sécurité Sociale in 3 steps

1

Connect to the dedicated website:
etudiant-etranger.ameli.fr

Enter the required information:
Name, date of birth, place of birth, email address...

Submit the required documents:
Passeport, residence permit, birth certificate...

2

Create your personal account

Download your temporary certificate (=attestation de droits)

Upload the missing or non-compliant documents to your personal account

After receiving your Permanent Social Security Number(NIR), download your final certificate online

3

Achieve the following next steps to be refunded in a simpler and faster way

Create your personal account on ameli.fr or on the App

Request your « Carte Vitale » (health card) after uploading additional documents

Choose and fill in the name of your primary care physician (médecin traitant)

3. ACCOMMODATION

Short-term accommodation

For your first nights, we recommend you to book a hotel or Airbnb. Then, take the time to visit several options before choosing your long-term accommodation.

Important: To avoid scams, we strongly recommend you to visit the flat **before** signing the lease. **Do not pay anything** before signing the lease. If the landlord is a private owner, always ask for his/her personal information (name, surname, phone number and ID number). Be extra careful if the monthly rent is lower than market price.

Long-term accommodation

Below is a list of websites offering housing in the cities where our campuses are located. The rent depends on where you live, type of housing and surface area. You can also find more information on [Campus France](#) website.

[My Studapart](#) is a dedicated platform for student accommodation. It provides a list of housing (individual flat or flatshares) located in private student residences close to our campuses.

[Housing Anywhere](#) provides a list of housing (studios, apartments, private room, shared room) available for rent or sublet. Offers come from students who rent their rooms, private landlords, host families, housing operators (agencies, residences...).

Tips: you may be eligible for the [French housing allowance](#)



[Spiky community](#) : offers a wide range of free documents to help international students settle into a new city or region. This application provides a wide range of accommodation addresses, as well as cultural addresses, restaurants and other useful information!

www.spikycommunity.com

[Erasmus Play](#) is a search engine and comparator of student accommodation throughout Europe. It allows you to quickly and easily compare all available accommodations. Moreover, you will be able to make your reservation in total security since all the accommodations come from verified platforms.

[LivinFrance](#) provides accommodation and services for exchange students looking for a **roommate**. No guarantor is required. If you take a pack "Livin-France", you will have access to services such as check-in inventory, legal advice, maintenance reactivity 72h.

What is VISALE?

Most of the time, having a French guarantor (who commits to paying the rent in case the student faces financial difficulties) is necessary to sign a lease. VISALE is a **free rental deposit**, which cover students for the duration of the lease. It is accessible to all international students (Europeans or holders of a visa VLS-TS). The VISALE subscription must be done before the signature of the lease.

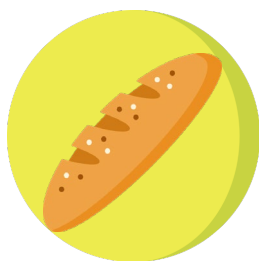
Tips: : If you do not have a French guarantor, it is also possible to pay your rent in advance for several months. In this case, please do ask for an official payment receipt.

4. COST OF LIVING IN FRANCE

Budget ranking by city

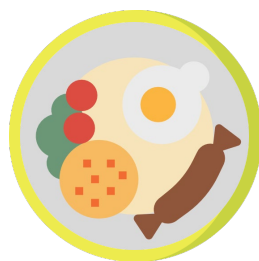
City	Average monthly rent (private market)	Public transportation	Food & Restaurants (National average)
Paris	885 €	29 €	288 €
Bordeaux	565 €	20 €	288 €
Lyon	558 €	25 €	288 €
Montpellier	495 €	16 €	288 €

A baguette



1€

A meal in a local restaurant



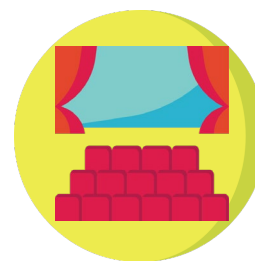
10€-20€

A coffee



2€

A cinema ticket



7.50€ to 9.50€

A metro ticket
A monthly pass



1,90€
25€ to 70€

A check up with a GP



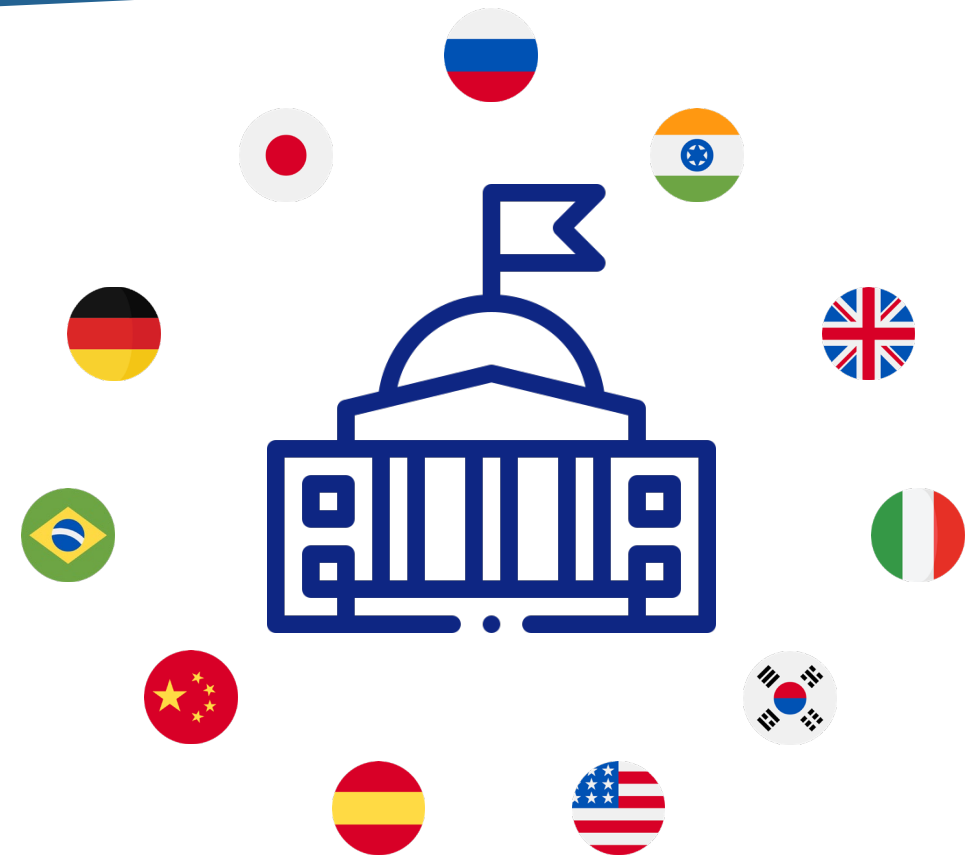
25€

More information about the [cost of living](#) in France.

5. MOBILE PHONE PROVIDERS

Upon your arrival, the first thing you would surely need is a SIM card and an internet connection on your cell phone. To begin with, you can get one of the pre-paid cards. Then, you can choose to subscribe to one of the major French providers such as Orange, Free Mobile (we recommended this one), SFR or Bouygues Telecom. Before subscribing, we recommend you to compare prices and conditions on a [price comparison](#) website (*in French*).

Tips: Check out carefully prices as well as their terms & conditions before subscribing.



6. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES

Embassies and consulates are useful in the event of various difficulties (repatriation, financial difficulties, illness, accident, etc.). In case of loss or theft of documents (passport, national identity card or driving licence) they will be able to provide you certificates.

Check out this [list of embassies and consulates](#) to find their contacts (*in French*).

7. BANKING

International students are allowed to get a [French bank account](#). It can be very handy in your day-to-day life.

Having an account in a French bank avoids paying charges and fees from your home country bank. You'll also get a chequebook from a French bank which is very useful to make payments – including your rent.

Three documents are needed to open a bank account: identification, proof of residence and an attestation of enrolment or a student card.



To know more about the procedure, watch this [video](#).

Tips: Make sure you arrive with a sufficient amount of cash (euros) for your first current expenditures in case your bank card is not accepted.



If needed, your family or friends can send you money from your country via Western Union.

If you want to open a European bank account I can advise you to open :

Revolut :

- Free current account
- Free physical and virtual debit card
- European IBAN – UK but some nationalities eligible for a French IBAN
- Free money transfer
- Free payment and ATM withdrawal (300€ ATM – payment or transfer)
- Low exchange rates



Wise :

- Free account available for residents in most countries
- Free physical and virtual debit card
- European IBAN
- Cheap money transfer
- Free payment and ATM withdrawal (200€ ATM)
- Lowest exchange rate

8. POST OFFICE



LA POSTE

In France, you'll notice that you need to use post office to mail most of official documents. The French postal service company is called "La Poste".

Click [here](#) to know more about their services (*in French*). Opening hours vary between post offices.



10. SUPPORT FROM STUDENT ORGANISATIONS

Several student organisations offer networking possibilities as well as various activities to discover France.

[ESN](#) (*Erasmus Student Network*) welcomes all international students with special events to help you discover the city, meet other students, answer your questions... If you register for the [Buddy System](#), you will have the opportunity to get a French sponsor. A sponsor is a student who volunteers to help foreign students when they arrive in France. They may help you to complete your first administrative procedures and become familiar with French culture.

ESN FACEBOOK GROUP can be very useful, please check it regularly :

Lyon : [ESN Lyon FB Group](#)

Montpellier : [ESN Montpellier FB Group](#)

Paris : [ESN Paris FB Group](#)

ESN in Lyon organizes [a pop up market](#), where you can borrow small furnitures or kitchen utensils for your housing for free! You can email them at hello@cosmolyon.com

[Erasmus Place](#) is a platform designed to help international students with accommodation, administrative procedures, jobs, etc. ! The organisation organizes events all around France and provides tips about good places to see in various French cities.

9. JOBS

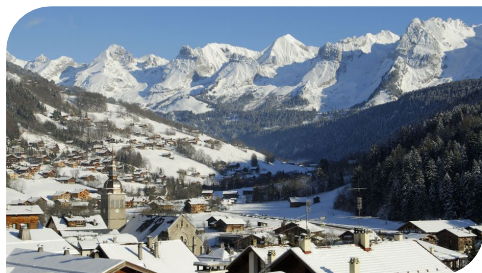
If you have a student visa VLS-TS, you will be able to [work part-time](#) in France (up to 20 hours/ week).

To find a job, the **best option** is to print your resume (with your contact details) and go directly to nearby restaurants, hotels, small shops to apply. When visiting, leave your resume so that they can contact you later.

Tips: It is easier to find a job if you speak French.

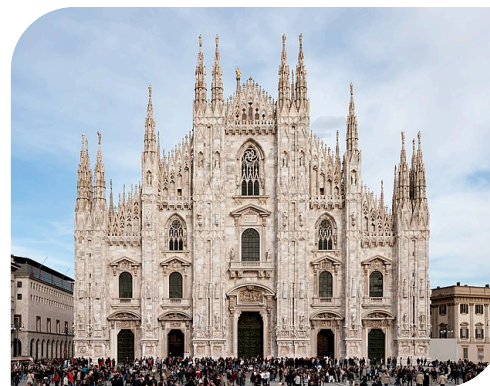
Examples of [events](#)/ activities organized by ESN Lyon:

- Climbing
- Ice skating
- Laser Game
- Tresor hunt
- Guided visits
- Party evening
- International dinner
- A day at the ski resort



Examples of [events](#)/ activities organized by Erasmus Place Lyon:

- Week-end in Milano, Belgium
- Week-end in Normandie, Bordeaux
- One day in the South of France
- A day at the ski resort
- Student parties



11. DISCOVER FRANCE AND EUROPE



To travel cheaply, from city to city, you can register on the website “BlaBlaCar” and choose a car driver.

CARPOOL: [BlaBlaCar](#)

Buses allow you to travel very cheaply. Most of them provide you an internet access.

BUSES: [BlaBlaBus](#), [Flixbus](#)



The very well-developed rail network offers a convenient way to travel city to city or across France. “Oui Go” trains are the cheapest you can find.

TRAINS: [Oui SNCF](#)

Flights provide quick connections between major cities, some at a very cheap price. You can also travel to neighbour countries easily.

FLIGHTS: [Air France](#), [Easy Jet](#), [Ryanair](#)



Tips: You can also consult [Omio](#) to compare prices and find the cheapest transport.

12. IN CASE OF EMERGENCY



EMERGENCIES	NUMBERS
Medical emergency (SAMU)	15
Firefighter	18
Police	17
Exchange & study abroad office	+33 4 72 85 17 95



Important: Call 112 for an English-speaking emergency service.