

Preparing your stay at ENTPE and in France

/// Preparing for your arrival

Obtaining your visa

Depending on your nationality, situation and length of stay, you may need to obtain a visa to study in France. The Campus France Offices in your country are your best contacts for this process. Don't forget to seek advice from the one in your country of residence.

There is also an official website for visas to France. Don't hesitate to consult it for all the information you need to prepare your stay in France.

/// I'm coming to study

Unless your country has specific bilateral agreements with France, you will need to apply for a **“Visa Long Séjour Valant Titre de Séjour” (VLS-TS student visa)**. This visa, which takes the form of a stamp or label affixed directly to your passport, allows you to study in France for a period of four months to one year. When it expires, you will need to apply for a residence permit to stay in France.

> How do I obtain my student VLS-TS?

If you live in one of the countries covered by the “Study in France” procedure, and you need a visa to study in France, you must first submit your application for higher education via the “Study in France” platform. Your visa application will be automatically forwarded to the French consular authorities in your country of residence via this platform. Your visa will cost you less if you follow this procedure.

If there is no Campus France Office in your country and you need a visa to study in France, contact the French consular authorities in your country of residence.

> What does the student VLS-TS allow?

All details about the “Student” Long-Stay Visa (VLS-TS) are available on the Campus France website.

It should be noted that these rules may differ for nationals of countries not governed by common law, but by bilateral agreements with special provisions. This is particularly the case for Algerian students.

/// I'm coming for a research visit

Once you have been admitted, please check france-visas.gouv.fr to see if you need a visa to enter France. If so, you must apply for a visa **at least 2 months before your planned departure date** for France, at the French consulate in your country of residence.

To do this, you will need a “**Convention d'accueil d'un chercheur étranger**” completed and signed by ENTPE.

This document will be validated by the French Consulate at the same time as your visa, and should be carried with you when you arrive in France, as it justifies your research and/or teaching activities in France, and is therefore equivalent to a work permit.

The “Convention d'accueil d'un chercheur étranger” also allows your spouse and children to apply for a visa to accompany you on your research project, provided they have sufficient income and insurance coverage.

Tip: submit your spouse's and children's applications at the same time as your own, so that they can apply for “researcher's spouse and family” status.

If you are coming to France for

- a stay of 90 days or less, you will need to apply for a “short-stay visa with scientific status”.
- a stay of more than 90 days, you will need to apply for a “Visa Passeport Talent Chercheur” if your stay is governed by a “Convention d'accueil”, or a “Visa D de long séjour Etudiant” if you are a doctoral student enrolled in a training program and therefore without a work contract.

Family: if you have a “Visa Passeport Talent Chercheur”, your spouse and children under 18 can apply for a “Visa Passeport Talent Famille”, which will enable your spouse to work in France. If they have reached the age of majority, your children will require a “visitor visa”.

If you have a “Visa D de long séjour Etudiant”, your spouse can apply for a “visitor visa”, which will not give him or her the right to work in France.

Preparing your budget

MONTHLY BUDGET - EXAMPLES OF EXPENSES	
Recommended budget = €700-800 per month	
Rent	300 to 500 € / month (depending on accommodation)
Meals	200 to 250 € / month
Electricity, gas, water	35 € / month

Insurances	Around 30€ / month
Phone - Internet	20 to 30 € / month
Transports	25 € / month (students) – 72€ / month (non-students)

This is just an estimate. The reality depends on individual choices, consumption habits and lifestyles.

Finding and booking accommodation

Providing proof of accommodation when you arrive in France is **essential** for obtaining your visa.
It is your responsibility to find accommodation, and it is up to you to make the necessary arrangements.
However, ENTPE can help you through its housing partners, subject to availability. If you would like to take advantage of this service, please let us know well in advance.
To rent accommodation in France, you will be required to have a **guarantor**, i.e. a person domiciled for tax purposes in France and capable of paying your rent in the event that you are no longer able to do so yourself. The guarantor must have sufficient income. This is not always possible for international residents. Here are some other solutions:

- **VISALE**: offers a complete, free guarantee for people aged 18 to 30, or over 30 under certain conditions. Most residences accept this certificate in place of a physical guarantor. You should therefore request it as soon as possible. *Prerequisite*: you must have obtained your visa for France first. For a better understanding, watch this Campus France tutorial.
- **GARANTME**: same system, but with a fee. Some residences and landlords are more reassured with this solution. Find out more here.
- Directly paying a good part of the rent for the entire period before moving in is another way of reassuring the landlord or residence.

> Reception and entry to your home are only possible on weekdays (excluding public holidays) and during the day. **There will be no reception in the evening, at weekends or on public holidays.** If you are due to arrive during one of these

periods, you will need to arrange temporary accommodation. To move into your accommodation, you may even need to make an appointment with the residence manager to settle the final formalities.

Checklist before leaving for France

Download the checklist to help you prepare for your trip to France.

A few tips:

- Before you leave, scan all your important documents and keep them in digital format by sending them to your e-mail account. Don't forget to make 2 or 3 photocopies to take with you in your suitcase, as you will quickly need them to open a bank account in France, to rent accommodation, etc.
- If your country uses a currency other than the Euro, remember to change money at the airport to cover your first expenses.
- If you don't have access to the Internet when you arrive, it is a good idea to create a file containing essential information: address and telephone number of ENTPE, directions from the airport or train station to the ENTPE, contact at ENTPE...

How to get to ENTPE

Access all the practical information you need to reach ENTPE.

/// On arrival

Bank account

We strongly advise you to choose an **online bank** that will enable you to open your bank account remotely, even before you arrive in France.
There are several banks that offer this. It is up to you to choose the one that suits you best.

Otherwise, to open a conventional bank account in France, you are free to choose your bank and you will need to provide the following documents:

- Copy of passport
- Copy of visa (or residence permit)
- ENTPE registration certificate / Employment contract
- Accommodation certificate

Watch this Campus France tutorial.

You will need to deposit a minimum amount when you open your account, depending on the bank. This is usually €10 or €15. You will usually receive your bank card and checkbook, if you have requested one, within 15 days. So make sure you have enough to cover your needs in the meantime.

Moving in

On the day of the move-in inspection and lease signature, you will need to present

- a certificate of home insurance,
- pay the deposit
- and first month's rent.

If any of these documents are missing, you won't have access to your accommodation, and ***it will be your responsibility to find temporary accommodation*** while you complete your file.

In France, **home insurance** is compulsory. It covers you in the event of fire, flood, theft, etc.
Some insurance companies allow you to take out a policy online and remotely. Think ahead!
All insurance companies and most banks offer home insurance policies with different

rates and conditions. Some offer special rates for students. Find out more and compare offers.

ENTPE has formed a partnership with HEYME, an insurance company specializing in students. They can offer you some of the cheapest home insurance on the market.
In France, home insurance generally includes **civil liability insurance**, which covers you for any damage you may unintentionally cause to others. This insurance, which is also compulsory, will be requested when you arrive at ENTPE. Make sure this is the case.
Generally speaking, the **deposit** is equivalent to one month's rent, excluding charges. Its purpose is to ensure that the landlord has the funds to cover repairs should you return the property damaged. An **inventory of fixtures** will be drawn up on arrival, so that you and the landlord can see for yourselves the state in which you found the property before moving in. So it is important to look carefully and report anything you notice. When you leave the property, you will be given an **inventory of fixtures** and, if there are no damages, the deposit will be returned to you within two months of your departure.

Please note: it is very important that the lease is in your name, and that you are the signatory, if you wish to apply for CAF housing benefit (see below).
In France, rent is generally payable at the beginning of the month. Make sure you receive proof of payment, called a **“quittance de loyer”**.

You need to find out in advance whether electricity is included in the charges. If it is not, you will need to open an **electricity contract** as soon as you arrive, with the operator of your choice. There are several. It is up to you to compare and choose.
The same goes for **gas**, if it is not included in your charges.
To do this, you will need a **“RIB” (Relevé d'Identité Bancaire)** meaning your bank account information, which means you will need to have already opened a bank account.
Internet is generally not included in the charges, except in certain student residences.

In France, the **CAF - Caisse d'Allocations Familiales -** can provide you with monthly financial assistance to pay part of your rent (**APL - Aide Personnalisée au Logement**).
This allowance can be granted for any stay of more than 3 months; it is calculated according to the type of accommodation, rent, resources and personal situation of the applicant.

You can run an online simulation to check your eligibility.

Once you have found your accommodation, open an application file on the CAF website as soon as possible, even if you don't yet have all the required documents in your possession, as the payment of benefits will depend on the date on which the file is opened, and this can take some time.
You must have a bank account in France to receive benefits if your application is accepted.

Most student residences offer accommodation with the minimum equipment required. But this is not always the case. Find out for yourself.
If you don't want to spend a night in an empty apartment, be sure to do your homework. MONDOPAL, for example, is a site that lets you buy everything you need at negotiated prices and have it delivered the day you move in.

Validating your visa

If you hold a “visa long séjour valant titre de séjour (VLS-TS)”, you will need to validate it online on arrival on the ANEF platform.

This **must** be done **within three months of your arrival in France**.

Click on “**Validate your VLS-TS long stay visa**” to enter your visa number and follow the instructions until your file is validated. To do this, you will need to purchase an electronic tax stamp:

- Online by credit card by clicking on “Buy an electronic tax stamp”.
- Or by purchasing one at a tobacconist's.

If you fail to complete this compulsory step within the allotted time, you will be in serious trouble.

Once this step has been successfully completed, you will receive a “**Confirmation de validation de VLS-TS**” (confirmation of VLS-TS validation) containing your “**foreigner number**”, usually starting with 99. This number identifies you in France. In the event of an inspection, you must be able to show your VLS-TS and this

validation confirmation. We therefore advise you to keep a digital version on your phone.

If you are staying in France for more than a year, after spending a year on a visa, or if you hold a visa marked “carte à solliciter”, you will need to apply for a first **residence permit** to extend your rights on French territory and justify your status. The procedure is paperless (except in exceptional cases). Renewal is online via the ANEF platform. You don't have to return to your country of origin to complete the procedure - it can be done from France.
It is recommended that you apply **4 months** before your visa or residence permit expires, and **no later than 2 months before it expires**.

Warning: if you exceed this deadline, you risk a fine and a suspension of rights, i.e. a situation in which your stay in France is no longer legal, which means that all your procedures are blocked, as well as the suspension of your work contract if you have a job.
It is your responsibility to take this step; ENTPE cannot do it for you. However, don't hesitate to ask for our help and to report any blockage to us.
You can also contact the Rhône “prefecture” directly via the “Contact us” section of their website. When you contact the “prefecture”, always state your identity, date and place of birth, and your foreigner number, so that they can quickly find your file.
Lyon “prefecture” address: Préfecture du Rhône 69419 Lyon Cedex 03

Please note that you will be allowed to enter only if you have an appointment – to take online.
For more information, visit the “Préfecture du Rhône”’s official website.

Taking care of your health

You **must** register with the French Healthcare system called “Caisse Primaire d’Assurance Maladie” (CPAM). This is free of charge, and enables you to be reimbursed for most of your healthcare costs in France.
Only European Union nationals are exempt from this requirement, as long as they have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) issued by their country of origin.

As you are not yet known to the service, if you have student status, you must first make yourself known by registering on this site.
Once your application has been processed, you will be given a Social Security number starting with 1 if you are a boy or 2 if you are a girl. This will enable you to access the classic “Assurance Maladie” website, and will be required for a number of purposes in France, notably by your future internship/job hosts.

Please note that if you are over 28, staying for more than 3 months and not employed, you will not need to go through the student procedure, but will be asked to join the CSS (Complémentaire Santé Solidaire).
If you are an employee, your employer will declare you to the “Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie”, which will trigger the formalities you will then need to complete.
Not a French speaker? The CPAM will be happy to help you in English by calling 09 74 75 36 46 (from France) or 0033 974 75 36 46 (from abroad) from 8.30am to 5.30pm.



When you access the classic “Assurance Maladie” website, also known as **Ameli**, you will need to request your **Carte Vitale**. This is a green and yellow card on which your social security number is written, and which you need to present at the doctor's or pharmacy to benefit from reimbursement of a large proportion of your healthcare costs.
While you are waiting for it to be created, you can download a **Rights Certificate** (“**Attestation de droits**”) from your personal Ameli space, which you can also present to health professionals.

In order to benefit from the best possible reimbursement of medical expenses, you must choose a “**médecin traitant**” (GP), who will be responsible for your medical care. To help you identify a preferred doctor, the “Assurance Maladie” maintains a directory in which you can filter according to your place of residence.

Price of a consultation: around €30

Please note that rates vary according to the sector and the practitioner's level of agreement. Check in advance.
However, some specialists can be consulted without going through your GP: these

include dentists, ophthalmologists and gynecologists.
To find an appointment, you can also consult Doctolib.

In France, medicines are only sold in **pharmacies**. Some common medicines, such as aspirin, are sold over the counter, but only prescription drugs are reimbursed by the Healthcare system.



Pharmacies are generally open from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday to Saturday. If you need to go to a pharmacy outside these hours, you must go to a “**pharmacie de garde**” (on-call pharmacy), a list of which can be found on the doors of all pharmacies.
There is a pharmacy on the same street as ENTPE, right next to the town hall, at 10 rue Maurice Audin.

While the compulsory Healthcare system reimburses a large proportion of medical care on the basis of agreed tariffs (between 30% and 80%), it does not cover it in full. You may have to pay “out-of-the-pocket expenses” which is known as “**reste à charge**”.
To better cover these out-of-pocket expenses, you can take out “complementary health insurance” (or “**mutuelle**”). This additional cover is not compulsory for students, but is strongly recommended. All insurance companies offer it.

ENTPE has formed a partnership with HEYME, an insurance company specializing in student insurance, which offers advantageous rates and a **10% discount** on health insurance (code to be requested from the International Relations Department), reserved for ENTPE students.

Do you have a **disability** or health problem that could have an impact on your stay? Please let us know as soon as possible, so that we can discuss any accommodation options with you.

Your **mental health** is paramount. When you are in mobility, far from your usual points of reference, in a country and environment you have to get to know, sometimes with a language and cultural barrier, don't underestimate your needs. It is perfectly normal to experience ups and downs. Above all, don't stay on your own. **ENTPE is here to listen**.
A **psychologist** is available on campus by appointment.
You also have access to the services of a **social worker** if you need help.

If you prefer, there are also **anonymous helplines** such as the **Red Cross** (0 970 28 30 00 - 7d / 7 from 8h to 20h) or **SOS Amitié accueil et écoute** (0 972 39 40 50 - 7d/7 and 24h/24). The latter also offers a special English-language hotline: 01 46 21 46 46.

rdv.apsytude@gmail.com.

/// Life in France and on campus

Time and seasons in France

There are 4 seasons in mainland France:

- Spring begins around March 21 - temperatures are mild and cool.
- Summer begins around June 21 - temperatures can be high: around 28°C and up to 36°C in times of heatwave.
- Autumn begins around September 21 - the weather is grey and rainy at this time of year.
- Winter begins around December 21 – it is cold, around ten degrees, and the thermostat can go into negative territory. Around 0°C, it can snow!

	Sunrise	Sunset
Spring / Summer	Between 5:45 and 6:45 am	Between 9:00 and 10:00 pm
Autumn / Winter	Between 7:45 and 8:30 am	Between 5:00 and 7:45 pm

In mainland France, there is only one time zone: GMT+2 or +1 (Europe/Paris, CEST). That said, France still applies a time change: there is summer time and winter time. The switch to summer time takes place at the end of March each year, and involves moving forward one hour in relation to winter time. This means we lose an hour's sleep!
The changeover to winter time takes place every year at the end of October, and consists of moving back one hour in relation to summer time. This time, it means we gain an hour's sleep!

Main emergency numbers in France and useful reflexes

112: Medical emergencies (number valid throughout the European Union) or 15 (French National number for “SAMU”). In the event of a life-threatening emergency, call 112 or go directly to a hospital emergency room. The nearest are Hôpital Edouard Herriot or Hôpital Saint-Luc-Saint-Joseph in Lyon.
17: Police
18: Fire Department. To report an accident or danger to property or people (fire, gas leak, road accident)

When calling, please specify:

- Who you are (victim/witness) and leave a telephone number in case they need to call you back
- Where you are (precise address): at least where the emergency situation is
- The reason for your call

114: this emergency number can be used to send a text alert to the emergency services. Initially designed for deaf or mute people, you can also use it if making noise would put you in danger
3114: number for listening and prevention of suicide and traumatic events
3624 (chargeable number): SOS Médecins: rather than going straight to a hospital emergency room, which is often overwhelmed, if you are feeling unwell but don't have a life-threatening emergency and can't wait to see your GP, contact SOS Médecins first. A doctor can come to you if necessary.
If you are feeling unwell but don't have a life-threatening emergency at night or at weekends: until midnight you can go to an on-call medical center where doctors can examine you. The nearest are in Villeurbanne and Décines.

If you have lost your...

- ...**bank card**: remember to cancel it immediately to avoid fraudulent payments! If your bank card is lost or stolen, call the number provided by your bank when you opened your account. This number is generally available 24/7.

- ...**passport**: go as quickly as possible to the nearest police station to report the loss or theft, and to avoid any identity theft. The police will issue you with a provisional travel document, after which you should contact your embassy to obtain a new one.
  If your stay in France was authorized by a VLS-TS affixed to your passport, you must also inform your local “prefecture” so that it can issue you with a new provisional residence permit.
- ...**phone**: notify your phone operator as soon as possible to protect your line. They will tell you what to do.

Public holidays in France

January 1: New Year's Day
Easter Monday: fixed according to the lunar calendar. Its date varies and corresponds to the day after Easter, the first Sunday following the spring moon.
May 1: Labor Day
May 8: End of the Second World War
Ascension Day: 40 days after Easter
July 14: National holiday
August 15: Assumption Day
November 1: All Saints' Day
November 11: End of the First World War
December 25: Christmas
For information, ENTPE is closed between December 25 and January 1.

December 8 is not a public holiday, but it is a very important date in Lyon. It is the “Festival of Lights”. Inhabitants put candles called “luminions” in their windows and go out to see the light shows organized by the city. The event has become so world-renowned that tourists flock here in droves, and the festivities are spread over several days.

Territorial organization in France



Transportation

> Public transport

In Lyon, the TCL company manages public transport (metro, tramway, bus).
You can find maps, itineraries, prices and timetables on their website.

If you don't wish to take out a subscription, note that single tickets cost 2€ and are valid for one hour on the transport network. Single-use paper tickets are no longer available. When you make your first purchase, you will be charged €0.20 for a cardboard holder. Keep it in a safe place, as you can then simply refill it for new journeys.
You should also be aware that most buses and tramways are now equipped with contactless terminals, enabling you to pay for your journey by credit card directly in the vehicle.

> Vélo'v

You can also use a self-service bike, the Vélo'v. A station is located just between ENTPE campus and Vaulx-en-Velin town hall.
The first 30 minutes of each trip are free. After that, see rates on the website.
After use, you must store your bike at a Vélo'v station. Check in advance that there is a station close to your destination.

If you don't want to take out a subscription but use a Vélo'v occasionally, a journey will cost you €1.80, with the first 30 minutes free and a flat rate beyond that. More information on their website.

Eating out

>University restaurants

A CROUS university restaurant is located on ENTPE campus. Your IZLY card entitles you to meals in all university restaurants. Meals are well-balanced and available at low prices.

> Bakeries, restaurants, fast-food outlets

Many bakeries and fast-food outlets also offer affordable menus. There are also a number of restaurants.
Don't forget that Lyon is the capital of French gastronomy!

> Buy local

The **GreenTPE** student association has set up a partnership with local producers who deliver their fresh, seasonal fruit and vegetables directly to the campus. For more information, contact the association directly.

> Supermarkets

Not far from ENTPE, you will find an Auchan supermarket on avenue Maurice Thorez.
A little further on, there is also a Lidl supermarket at 32 avenue Marcel Cachin and a Grand Frais at 76 rue de la République.
You can find a shopping centre at "Les 7 chemins" or "La Soie".

Other important points of reference

> Post offices

To send mail, you need to go to a post office. The nearest one is on the same street, at 14 rue Maurice Audin. In France, post offices are generally open Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm and Saturday from 8am to 12pm. You can find all the rates for your shipments here.



> Police station

If you have been robbed or assaulted, report it immediately to the police. The Vaulx-en-Velin police station is also close to ENTPE campus, at 1 avenue Georges-Dimitrov.

Mobile telephony and internet

There are several operators in France. Visit their branches or websites to find out more about their packages, current offers, cancellation conditions, the cost of international calls and out-of-pocket rates. These operators can also provide you with Internet subscriptions.
Prepaid cards are also available.

Sorting and recycling waste

In France, waste is not all disposed of in the same place. Specific containers are allocated to different categories of waste.
As a general rule, the color code is fairly harmonized across the country:

- Yellow for plastic and cardboard packaging
- Green for glass waste
- Blue for newspapers and magazines
- Black for the rest

Please note that **composting fruit and vegetable peelings has recently become compulsory**. Brown compost bins are also available on the street.

All this is regulated and you can be fined if you don't comply.
On campus, you will also find color-coded bins for sorting your waste.

Discovering Lyon, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, France and Europe

Lyon is a great city to live in.
Capital of the Gauls and then known as “Lugdunum”, Lyon is a city steeped in history, and has played an important role thanks to its strategic geographical location. The city is crossed by two rivers: the Rhône and the Saône, which meet in a district to which this phenomenon has given its name: the Confluence.

Lyon has two hills: Fourvière, traditionally known as “the hill of prayer”, where the Fourvière Basilica overlooks the city and where religious life was concentrated, and Croix-Rousse, “the hill of workers”, nicknamed after the “canuts”, Lyonnais weavers who settled there. This part of the city is also famous for its artists, and in particular for its highly realistic frescoes known as “trompe-l'oeil”.
Find out more about Lyon here or at the tourist office. Lyon inhabitants are known for being very proud of their city, so they will be delighted to show you around.

More generally, you will find more information here about the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, rich and varied in landscapes and activities.
Lyon is just 2 hours from the mountains and the sea. Numerous rail lines serve other French cities from Lyon, and some companies, such as Ouigo, offer reduced fares. For example, Lyon is less than 2 hours from Paris by high-speed train (TGV).

Find more information about France here
Lyon is also very close to Switzerland and Italy, and not far from Spain either. So it is easy to explore Europe from Lyon.

Other useful sites

- Government page reserved for international students
- Housing, insurance, banking and tips guide from Livin France
- Lyon Campus page dedicated to international students with local information and tips
- Campus France YouTube channel and tutorials
