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Planning your budget is the first step towards a successful student life at PSL. What are the expected expenses? How can you best manage your budget? What kinds of financial aid are available to international students? This practical guide can help you with all these questions.

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# I. THE BUDGET FOR YOUR FIRST MONTH IN FRANCE

Your arrival in France involves one-time settling-in expenses that may double or even triple your standard monthly budget. It is therefore recommended to plan a budget for your first month in France to avoid unexpected surprises.

In general, the expenses of this first month may include:

- your plane/train ticket
- your tuition and other fees
- your first month's rent and security deposit
- the validation of your student visa VLS-TS (if you are from outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland)
- the purchase of bed linen/dishes/furniture/ appliances

Let's talk about these expenses in detail.

## 1. YOUR PLANE/TRAIN TICKET

Advice (if you are from outside EU/EEA/ Switzerland): If you want to book your flight while your visa application is still pending, we advise you to take a flexible ticket.

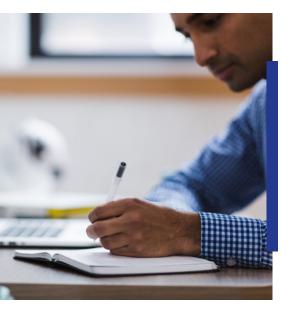
It will be more expensive but it will prevent you from having to buy a new one in case your visa is not issued in time.

## 2. TUITION FEES, THE CVEC AND THE LIABILITY INSURANCE

Tuition fees may vary depending on the nature of the diploma (national diploma or institutional diploma) and the level of study (undergraduate/ graduate). To determine the exact amount of your tuition fees (if this information is not given when you are admitted), don't hesitate to contact the secretariat of your program.

For the 2024/25 academic year, the tuiton fee for programs issueing national diploma is €250/ year (for a Master's degree) and €175/year (for a Bachelor's degree) for all students, regardless of national origin.







The CVEC, or Contribution Vie Etudiante et de Campus (Student and Campus Life Contribution), is a mandatory contribution of €103 that most students must pay each year. Payment confirmation is required to finalize your academic enrollment. The CVEC will be used to finance student association projects, improve student support services, including the PSL Welcome Desk and provide access to sports facilities.

Civil liability insurance is compulsory part of university enrolment. It covers any damage you may unintentionally cause. The cost varies between €10 and €15 per year. It can sometimes be included in other insurance packages, including home insurance or complementary private health insurance ("la mutuelle").

#### 3. SECURITY DEPOSIT FOR YOUR ACCOMMODATION

The security deposit is a sum of money that the tenant must pay to the landlord right after signing the lease (rental agreement). This amount will be cashed immediately and kept by your landlord for the duration of the rental period. The amount of the deposit is limited to two months' rent (charges excluded) if your apartment is furnished; if your apartment is unfurnished, the amount should not exceed one month's rent (charges excluded).

In general, the security deposit is paid to the landlord at the same time as the first month's rent. To learn about different levels of rents in the Paris region, please consult the second part of our guide.

When you leave the apartment, the landlord will be required to reimburse the total amount of the deposit if no damages are observed compared with what is noted in the check-out inventory ("état des lieux").

## 4. FEES FOR THE VALIDATION OF YOUR RESIDENCE PERMIT (IF YOU ARE NOT CITIZEN OF EU/EEA/SWITZERLAND)

Upon your arrival in France, you must validate your student visa (VLS-TS – visa long séjour valant titre de séjour) within three months. Validation is carried out on **the online platform**. You will be prompted to pay a 50-euro fee ("timbre fiscal") that can be purchased online or in-person at a "tabac."

## 5. FURNISH YOUR ACCOMMODATION

When you rent a furnished studio or student room, a bed, a desk, and sometimes an individual kitchenette (stove, microwave and refrigerator) will be provided. Sheets, comforter, pillow and dishes may not be provided. Before your arrival, please check what appliances/equipment you will need to purchase yourself to prepare your budget accordingly.

If you are living with roommates or a host family, check with them if you have full access to kitchen utensils, appliances and cleaning products.

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## **II. YOUR "STANDARD" MONTHLY BUDGET**

Once you have settled in, your standard monthly budget will normally include the following: accomodation, food, healthcare, insurances, banking fees, transportation, phone plan, and leisure.

### 1. ACCOMMODATION

Expenses related to accomodation may include:

- Rent
- Charges: for example electricity, water, garbage collection...

## Rental price range in the Parisian region (Île-de-France):

Monthly average rent				
Accomodation type	Paris	Parisian region (outside of Paris)		
Room in a host's house	between €500 and €700	between €400 and €600		
Room in a co-living house	between €500 and €700	between €450 and €600		
Studio in a student residence (type CROUS)	between €400 and €550	between €400 and €550		
Studio	at least €600	between €500 and €700		

<sup>\*</sup> For a single room, we refer to a surface area of around 15  $m^2$ ; for a studio, our reference area is around 18  $m^2$ 

#### 2. FOOD BUDGET

Please note that the cost of living is significantly higher in Paris than in other regions.

## A. Restaurants

Here are some examples of "standard" prices that you will find in Parisian cafés and restaurants:

- a cup of coffee in a bar or restaurant: €2;
- a meal at a fast-food restaurant: €7;
- a meal in a classical restaurant: €10 to €20;
- a sandwich in a bakery with a drink: : €5 to €8.

<u>Good to know</u>: As a student, you have access to the "university restaurants" which offer complete meals for 3.30 euros. There is a point system for each meal component. When you get your tray, be sure to check the sign explaining your choices. These restaurants offer 1 euro meals for students with scholarships and for students with financial challenges.

## B. Food shopping

You can save money by cooking at home. An average budget is 200 euros per month.

For shopping, you can visit supermarkets and open-air markets. There is also a monthly food distribution organized by PSL Student Life to help supplement your supplies.

Common supermarket chains include:

- Cheap prices: Lidl, Leader Price, Aldi
- Intermediate/more expensive prices: G20, Franprix, Monoprix, Magasins U, Casino, Auchan, Carrefour, Intermarché, Coccinelle, etc.
- Organic supermarkets: Naturalia, Biocoop, Bio c' Bon, etc.





### 3. HEALTH-RELATED EXPENSES

As an international student from outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland, you can benefit from the French social security system and be reimbursed up to 70% of your medical expenses.

If you are an EU/EEA or Swiss national, you can apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) from the social security agency of your home country, and this card will allow you to be reimbursed for your health expenses by the social security system of your country.

Remember to declare a general practitioner ("médecin traitant") as soon as possible in order to optimize your reimbursement. In fact, the cost of a GP consultation varies according to the sector to which your doctor belongs. The following table shows you the standard cost of a GP consultation and its reimbursement:

Sector	Tariff	Reimbursement basis	Reimbursement rate	Amount of reimbursement
1	€25	€25	70 %	€16.50
2	Fees with controlled overruns	€25	70 %	€16.50
2	Fees fixed freely by the practitioner	€23	70 %	€15.10

<sup>\*</sup> The amounts indicated take into account the fixed contribution of 1  $\in$  .

If you would like more information on the sectors, do not hesitate to visit the **Health Insurance website.** 

It is also important to know that your general practitioner must provide a referral for you to see a specialist, except for ophthalmologic and dental consultations. It is what we called the care pathway, it guarantees you a better reimbursement of your health expenses.

To get better coverage, take into consideration the subscription to a complementary health insurance ("mutuelle").

<u>Good to know</u>: as a student, you have access to a psychological assistance services.

For more information: <a href="https://psl.eu/vie-de-campus/services-etudiants/le-service-sante-etudiante">https://psl.eu/vie-de-campus/services-etudiants/le-service-sante-etudiante</a>



## 4. INSURANCE (HOME INSURANCE, HEALTH INSURANCE)

## A. Home insurance

In France, home insurance is mandatory for tenants. The price of a home insurance depends on the characteristics of your accommodation: area, number of rooms, dependence, number of occupants, etc.

The following table gives you information about the range of prices of a home insurance:

Accommodation type	Monthly price	Annual price
Independent studio of 20 m²	€6	€73
Shared apartment of 30 m² - 2 rooms	€9	€112
Shared apartment of 40 m² - 2 rooms	€11	€135







## B. Supplementary health insurance ("mutuelle")

The social security coverage can reimburse you for most of the general health expenses; however, hospitalization, optical, dental and prevention expenses are reimbursed at a very low rate. In this case, health expanses can be very expensive. It is strongly recommended that you subscribe to a complementary health insurance.

We can give you a few examples of complementary health insurance for students:

- Complementary health insurance for students and young workers: Heyme
- Complementary health insurance **LMDE**
- Complementary health insurance **SMENO**

If you are unable to afford complementary health insurance ("une mutuelle"), then you may be eligible for "Complémentaire Santé Solidaire (CSS)," a government program that provides free or reduced cost care according to your financial situation. First, confirm your eligibility on the simulation page of the "mes droits sociaux" website. Then, if eligible, apply via either your Ameli account or by mailing form "Demande de Complémentaire santé solidaire" to your Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie (CPAM).

<u>Good to know</u>: Since February 2023, the Ile-de-France region is offering a regional complementary health insurance with three partners. It is open to anyone living in the region, is more general but offers a very good coverage. For more information: <a href="https://www.iledefrance.fr/mutuelle-sante">https://www.iledefrance.fr/mutuelle-sante</a>

### 5. BANKING

Opening a French bank account is necessary for your daily life in France. You can find both physical and online banks in France. Physical banks may offer you more comprehensive services but their fees of service are higher. Online banks have lower fees, but you will be required to provide a French RIB (bank account identification number) before opening an account. As a result, you will have to open an account in a physical bank first when you arrive in France.

Student associations often establish partnerships with banks, allowing students to benefit from certain advantages. Ask your school and more particularly your BDE (student office) for more information.

Banks generally have attractive packages for students, with welcome offers (for example, they can offer you around €80 on your account) and reduced fees

Some examples of "physical" banks (in alphabetical order):

- Banque Populaire
- Banque Postale
- BNP Paribas
- Crédit Agricole
- Crédit Mutuel
- LCL
- Société Générale

**Right to an account:** Depending on the geopolitical situation, you may encounter additional difficulties to open a bank account. Nevertheless, there is <u>a right to a bank account</u> in France. It is possible, in case of persistent difficulties, to ask the Banque de France to open an account, although this process can be long.

If you need assistance, please contact us: welcomedesk@psl.eu.







## A. Telephone subscription

Many mobile plans are offered by traditional operators (Orange, Bouygues Telecom, SFR, Free), and others by MVNOs (Mobile Virtual Network Operator). MVNOs may offer packages that cost less, but they usually don't have a physical store. You can choose your plan according to your specific needs, such as unlimited calls/SMS, international calls, 4G/5G, etc. In general, the monthly fee for your plan is deducted from your French bank account on a fixed date of the month. Thus, ordering a French mobile card can only be done after your bank account has been opened.

In general, you can subscribe to a package covering unlimited calls/SMS and 50 GB of mobile data for about 10 euros. The mobile card itself is not free, it costs 10 euros.

Please note that there are offers "with commitment" and "without commitment". If you choose a package "with commitment", you cannot cancel your contract during the commitment period, otherwise you will have to pay significant fees. If you choose a "no commitment" package, you can cancel your contract without any additional costs. In the case of a change of operator, you will need to order a new mobile card from your new operator; nevertheless, it is possible to keep your phone number.

## **B.** Internet subscription

While you can use the free Wi-Fi on campus, you'll probably need to subscribe to an Internet package for your home. For a room or a studio, you can choose a package that costs around 20 or 30 euros per month, which may include additional services. If you choose a mobile package and an Internet package from the same operator, it is advisable to choose a "box + mobile" package, because it's cheaper. Before subscribing, remember to learn about the rules associated with your contract's cancellation.



## 7. DAILY TRANSPORTATION

## A. Public transportation

The metro network provides transportation within the city of Paris and its immediate suburbs, while the rail network RER (Réseau express régional) and Transilien (réseau de trains de banlieue) will allow you to travel to the farther suburbs. Hundreds of bus lines complete this network.

It is good to know that young people under 26 years old can benefit from preferential rates for subscriptions.

- The Imagine'R card: reserved for students under 26 years in the Ile-de-France region, this special pass allows unlimited travel throughout the region for 374.40 euros per year. The subscription link: <a href="magine-r.com/souscription-en-ligne/">imagine-r.com/souscription-en-ligne/</a>
- The Ticket jeune (youth ticket): reserved for people under 26 years old and valid for 24 hours on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, it allows you to travel freely in a limited area for only 4.70 euros\*.

\*Public transportation pricing is based on the zones crossed. For more information, please consult the following map made by the RATP (Régie autonome des transports parisiens): ratp.fr/en/plan-rer.

In addition, some options are available to everyone. If you only travel occasionally by public transportation, and you want to avoid waiting in line for tickets, you may be interested in the Navigo Liberté +. With this pass, you pay per trip, and the payment is made by direct debit the following month. You can find the prices here.

For more details, please consult the website of the RATP: <u>ratp.fr/titres-et-tarifs</u>.





## **B. Self-service bicycles**

In Paris, self-service bicycles are available via the city or private companies.

Vélib' offers affordable service packages for young people and students from 14 to 26 years old. Depending on your situation and your needs, you have the following options:

- -> V-Plus package (30 minutes max per trip, €3.10 per month if you're 26 or younger)
- -> V-Max package (One hour max per trip, or 30 min with an electric Vélib, €9.30 per month if you're 26 or younger).

Please note.

For subscribers, trips outside the package are not included in the monthly rate. You can learn about all the conditions and rates on <u>velib-metropole.fr</u>.

#### 8. RESIDENCE PERMIT RENEWAL

Since 2020, you renew your residence permit online. Remember that you must submit your renewal application 4–2 months before your current status expires. Here is the link to the dedicated platform: <a href="mailto:administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/">administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/</a>

For a student residence permit, the fee is 75 euros via fiscal stamp, to be paid upon pick-up of your residence permit card.

Please note that if you submit your application after the deadline, you will have to pay a fee of €180.

### 9. LEISURE

The cost of entertainment and cultural activities varies greatly. In Paris, you can find activities for all tastes and budgets. It is quite often that you can have access to discounts and special rates if you show your student card or if you are under 25 years old. Here are some examples which can help you estimate your budget for entertainment:

- 1 entry to the cinema at the under-26 rate: between 5 and 7.50 euros;
- 1 visit to a museum or a national monument: free for all European Economic Area citizens under 26 years old, or between 5 and 15 euros;
- 1 entry to the swimming pool at a reduced rate: between 1.50 and 3 euros;
- 1 paperback book: between 5 and 10 euros;
- 1 theater ticket: from 10 euros;
- 1 national daily newspaper: between 2 and 3 euros.

<u>Good to know</u>: As a student you have access to the CROUS de Paris ticketing service, which offers advantageous rates for many activities, so don't hesitate to explore it. <a href="https://www.culture-crous.paris/billetterie-accueil/">https://www.culture-crous.paris/billetterie-accueil/</a>

Within **Université PSL** there are many free activities such as concerts or sports activities. You will find them in the **student newsletter.** 





### 10. BOOKS. PHOTOCOPYING AND PRINTING

#### A. Book purchase and access to libraries

In general, the price of an academic book or textbook can be a few around 30 euros. In some cases, you can find good deals in bookstores or on platforms selling used books.

Your PSL enrollment provides you access to some libraries! Outside of PSL, the municipal libraries of Paris are open to all, and you can register for free to borrow books. The Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF), the national library of France, is also accessible to you. It includes the "Bibliothèque tous publics" (François-Mitterrand) which is open to everyone from 16 years old; and the "Bibliothèque de recherche" (François-Mitterrand, Richelieu-Louvois, Arsenal and Opéra) which contains heritage collections and is accessible only with a research justification. To access the BNF, you can choose between the Pass BNF lecture/culture (€15 per year, for the Bibliothèque tous publics) and the Pass Recherche (€55 per year, for the Bibliothèque de recherche) depending on your needs.

<u>Good to know</u>: if you are a student under 35 years old, you can benefit from reduced rates for the Research Pass. In this case, the annual fee is 35€. In addition, students of the École nationale des Chartes can benefit from a fee waiver.

## B. Photocopying and printing

The cost of photocopying and printing varies according to the size, color and number of pages you need. For example, if you print your documents at an off-campus print shop and you want the documents to be black and white (A₄ size), the cost of printing a single page may be €0.20. If you print more, the cost of printing each page will decrease. The same goes for photocopying and scanning. Printing services in your school may or may not be free of cost.

## 11. TRAVEL IN FRANCE

You can travel within France by plane, train, or bus, the latter being the least expensive option. You can also rent a car (be sure to check foreign license and insurance requirements) or try a carpooling application.



- 1 round trip Paris-Marseille on the classic TGV: 140 euros.
- $\bullet$  1 round trip Paris-Strasbourg by Flixbus: 60 euros.
- 1 one-way ticket Paris-Lille by OUIGO (low-cost TGV): 10 euros.
- 1 one-way ticket Paris-Lyon by plane: 100 euros.
- 1 one-way ticket Paris-Rouen by carpooling (Blablacar): 10 euros.

<u>Good to know</u>: Students can benefit from many transportation discounts...

Here are some good deals for traveling by train:

- <u>Prem's</u> tickets (billets Prem's): the booking is available for three months before the departure date, with cheap prices.
- Ouigo trains: these low-cost trains mainly serve stations far from city centers, but accessible by public transport.
- The <u>carte Jeune</u> (youth card): reserved for people under 28 years old, it costs 50 euros per year and allows you to benefit from at least 25% discount on all trains.
- The <u>TGV Max</u> pass: also reserved for people under 28, this pass costs 79 euros per month and allows you to take the TGV at will under several conditions.
- The <u>Interrail Pass</u>: this pass allows you to travel freely (or almost freely, depending on the country) by train in over 30 European countries.







# II. FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Your student status allows you to benefit from several financial aids.

### 1. PUNCTUAL FINANCIAL AID

If you are in financial difficulty or if you face unexpected expenses, you can apply for punctual financial aid from your institution. This aid is financed by the FSDIE (Fonds de solidarité et de développement d'initiative étudiante, Solidarity and Student Initiative Development Fund). For more information, please contact the social service office of your school.

**Useful information:** If you need to meet a CROUS social worker in Paris, it will be possible to do it directly at Dauphine – PSL. This service is open to all PSL students. Appointments must be made on **messervices.etudiant.gouv.fr**.

## 2. HOUSING AID

The Caisse d'allocation familiale (CAF) offers personal housing aid to people with low incomes. There are three types of aid: APL ("Aide personnalisée au logement"), ALF ("Allocation de logement familiale"), and ALS ("Allocation de logement sociale"). Students enrolled in a degree program or in university mobility at PSL may be eligible for APL and ALS.

- APL: You can benefit from an APL if you are a tenant of accommodation that has been the object of an agreement between the landlord and the State. This agreement fixes, for example, the evolution of the rent, the duration of the lease, the conditions of maintenance and the standards of comfort.
- ALS: You may be eligible for an ALS if your accommodation is not covered by an agreement.

To apply for this aid, please sign up on the CAF website.

Please note that this process can take several months, and the aid should be considered an "extra" in your budget.

## 3. FOOD AID FOR STUDENTS

The Paris City and several solidarity associations offer free food aid for all students. If you have difficulties, don't hesitate to apply. Here are a few examples of the food aid programs:

## A. Student social grocery store of Secours Populaire

This social grocery store is opened thanks to the partnership between Secours Populaire and the CROUS of Paris. It allows students to buy dry goods, fruits, vegetables and hygiene products at a fixed solidarity price. Address: 3–11 Rue Nicole-Reine Lepaute, 75013 Paris (in the Lepaute CROUS residence)

## B. Solidarity grocery store of Crimée

This solidarity grocery store is located in the 19th arrondissement of Paris and is open to families, young people, working people, students, and elderly people in temporary or long-term precarious situations. In this store, you can find fresh and various food products, as well as household cleaning products, personal hygiene products, baby products and other types of products which are offered at a price of 10 to 30% of their market value.

Address : 166 rue de Crimée, 75019 Paris.





### C. Linkee Paris

Linkee is an association supported by the city of Paris. It offers balanced and sustainable food aid to all students in need, without any prerequisites. To benefit from its food aid, pre-register by email.

You can find information here.

## D. Other types of food aid accessible to students:

- AGORAé : <a href="https://agorae.ageparis.org/">https://agorae.ageparis.org/</a>
- Co'p1 Solidarités Étudiantes : <a href="https://cop1.fr/">https://cop1.fr/</a>

Les Restos du Coeur de Paris, in partnership with the CROUS de Paris and supported by the city of Paris, have opened a center of reception and food aid for students. Food aid is offered free of charge to students who have accommodation in Paris, and who meet the resource criteria.

For more information, please consult this page: restosducoeur.org/nos-actions/aide-alimentaire/.restosducoeur.org/nos-actions/aide-alimentaire

#### 4. IF YOU ARE A REFUGEE

**If you are from Syria or neighboring countries,** you are concerned by the **HOPES project** (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians).

The objective of the HOPES project is to improve the situation of young Syrian refugees, as well as of youth in vulnerable positions, in five countries that have taken in Syrian refugees (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey) and to make it easier for them to access higher education. A page dedicated to this project is available on the Campus France website: campusfrance.org/fr/projet-Hopes-etudiants-syriens.

If you are eligible for the "temporary protection" introduced since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, you have access to many resources that you will find in part here: <a href="https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15663">https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15663</a>

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## Any questions?

Please reach out to: welcomedesk@psl.eu +33 1 75 00 02 91

psl.eu/vie-de-campus/services-etudiants/psl-welcome-desk psl.eu



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