



Long-stay visas for students

Visa requests should be made to the French consulate or embassy in your country of origin. There is a minimum two-week waiting period.

(For more information, go to

<http://www.diplomatie.fr/venir/visas/pays.html>).

All non-European students (i.e. those not from the countries of the European economic area, Andorra, Monaco, Switzerland, San Marino, or the Vatican) planning to stay for more than six months must obtain a student long-stay visa in order to study in France. This visa must be presented within two months of the student's arrival in France in order to obtain a student residence permit.

Visa requests should be made to the French consulate or embassy in your country of origin.

Documents usually required when applying for a visa:

- Proof of admission to an educational institution.
- Proof of financial resources for one year.
- Proof of the existence of a bank account from which funds will be transferred.
- A valid passport whose period of validity encompasses the entire length of the visa period requested.

Note

- Proof of health insurance coverage is required for students over 28 years of age enrolled in an institution not covered by the French social security system. No proof is required for those under 28 who are enrolled in a recognized institution.
- Depending upon the country, other documents may be required.

Accommodation in France

Unlike other countries, France does not have a tradition of large campuses, and there are far too few university residence halls to accommodate every student. Both French and foreign students must find housing in the private sector, where costs can be higher, particularly in large cities and especially in Paris. In most French university towns, there is an information office (guichet) that will help foreign students through the administrative and search process for housing.

University residences

Located on campus or in town, these residences, run by the CROUS (*Centres Régionaux des Œuvres Universitaires et Sociales*), offer 10- to 12-sq.m furnished rooms equipped with a sink (showers and toilets are shared). The monthly rent is between €140 and €400. It is very difficult to secure a place in such residences, however (particularly in Paris), as French government foreign scholarships holders are given priority.

Private student residences

Private student residences can be found in France's major cities. Their numbers have greatly increased in recent years in an attempt to make up for the lack of spaces in university residences. The rent ranges from €600 to €700 per month in Paris and from €400 to €700 elsewhere.

Private housing

As a student, you must often pay an initial deposit, even for a one-room or studio apartment. In general, you must show proof that your monthly income is at least four times the amount of the rent.

Rooms in private houses

It is possible to rent a room in a private home, although this solution is more suitable for short stays. In Paris, the monthly rent varies from €800 to €1050 per month – elsewhere, expect to pay half that rate.

Note: Housing aid

There are two types of housing aid (these cannot be combined):

Allocation de Logement à Caractère Social (ALS): provided that they meet certain conditions, all foreign students can qualify for this type of aid.

Aide Personnalisée au Logement (APL): If the housing is subject to an APL agreement, the student may qualify for a rent reduction.

More information and conditions can be found on the *Caisse d'Allocations Familiales* (CAF) website: www.caf.fr