



**Guide for
International Students**

MINES ParisTech

2012

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Welcome !

This guide is aimed at providing prospective and current international students with some valuable information on the school itself, the opportunities that it gives, on extra-curricular activities and in general on life in Paris.

Due to a rather short format of the text and the changes that could be applied by external organisations, not all the details have been included in this guide. The present brochure provides some useful information on how to get started and links to help readers find out the specifics. So for more information about education at the Ecole visit the website <http://www.mines-paristech.eu/>, for further information on other issues you can consult the relevant organization websites or others guides for foreigners like “[Je vais en France](#)”.

The authors, all of whom are the current students of MINES ParisTech and many are of foreign origin, hope along with the professors and the Administration that their experience shared in this guide will be useful and will help you make Paris a home away from home.

We hope that you will have a pleasant stay in Paris and that you will enjoy your experience of being a MINES ParisTech student!

The editorial team

Paris, France

May 2012

Glossary

WEI (Weekend d'Intégration) – Integration weekend, a weekend outing at the beginning of the academic year.

SkiMath – one week in January when a course of Mathematics-3 and skiing are put together; takes place in the mountains.

La Mine – this is the name sometimes used among students to refer to the school itself (in the sense of a place).

La Meuh – this is the Maison des Mines, the usual hall of residence (see Accommodation).

Admis par voie universitaire or also **AST** (Admis sur Titres) – students, mostly foreigners, admitted to the school not through the “concours” like most french first-year students, but through a series of interviews, documents reviews, and exams. This is the most common way for double degree students.

SGS (Système de Gestion de la Scolarité) – the IT system that deals with the marks, choice of courses and other information about students' studies; includes course descriptions.

Campus – an e-learning system of the school; many courses are represented on this system, therefore, it could be used by teachers to give assignments, provide information etc

Promo – the students of the same year. For example, P09 are the students who started their first year (1A) studies in 2009 or joined them later.

MINES ParisTech

You can join the school in which history and heritage are an integral part of its identity and durability.

MINES ParisTech was established in 1783, when the exploitation of mines was a high-technology industry. Quite naturally, the School followed the development of industry and MINES ParisTech and nowadays, studies, develops and teaches all the techniques useful for engineers, including economic and social sciences.

Thanks to its multidisciplinary teaching, the School trains non-specialized engineers, able to resolve a real complex problem, carry out an industrial project, and treat all the aspects so technical as scientific, sociological, economic or ethical.

The background of the School, connected to the industry of mines, concentrating all the scientific knowledge, open all the fields of research today: transport, energy, mechanics ...

Ever since 1783, the School has always been able to keep ahead of a changing world by taking part in projects and launching them with future potential.



*The building of the School on Boulevard Saint-Michel, Paris
Photo courtesy of MINES ParisTech*

Courses at the school

Cycle « Ingénieurs civils »

The most common program at the école is the “Cycle Ingénieurs civils”, or in English, “General Engineering”, though the more precise name of the major is Science and Executive Engineering. Each year there are about 100 new first-year students. This program includes core courses and electives which are to be chosen at the beginning of each semester. The whole program takes three years but foreign students can be admitted not only to the first year. French students are generally admitted “sur concours”, that is depending on the marks they achieved at the end of classes préparatoires, whereas foreigners are often admitted “sur titres”, that is they are selected in the process of special exams, interviews, though their records are also taken into consideration.

Courses

A full and up-to-date list of courses, which can be taken by students, can be seen at the school's website and is available in English <http://sgs.ensmp.fr/prod/sgs/ensmp/catalog/index.php?lang=EN> and in French: <http://sgs.ensmp.fr/prod/sgs/ensmp/catalog/index.php?lang=FR>. These pages provide brief descriptions of the courses and some other information on the curriculum (for example, for some courses exam papers of the previous years)

The Ecole has an Internet-based learning system, Campus. Some courses have, in addition to “traditional” teaching methods, other materials stored in this system or require assignments to be submitted via this platform.

Some unusual courses

ATHENS week.

Twice a year students have the opportunity to take a course at a different ParisTech school in Paris or at another university in Europe, chosen from the ones taking part in this exchange program. The offered range of courses is extremely wide: engineering, mathematics, physics, IT etc. A full list of courses is at www.athensprogramme.com

Mecatronique.

A course designed to put students in the place of a real engineer – teams design and build robots and develop other solutions in mechanics (Meca-) and electronics (-tronique) according to a specification given by the client. This course now has its own website www.mecatro.fr but is also listed in the course list, where description in English is available.

Minors (« options »)

More than 15 minors (or options, as they are called in the French catalogue) are available at the school covering many subjects taught here. A full list of options is posted at: <http://sgs.ensmp.fr/prod/sgs/ensmp/catalog/list.php?lang=EN&year=2A&type=DescOPTION>. With the option chosen, students have specific courses, associated visits which run during the second and the third years, often in blocks (for example, the whole week). The option also determines your final specialization as well as the internship at the end of the third year. Students who are studying at the school from the beginning of Year 1 choose their minor at the end of the first year. Those who arrive for the second year will need to make their choice during the first weeks (which are extremely busy), so **it might be a good idea** to decide on your preference before you come here (and this is often discussed during the admission interviews).

Internships

Students admitted to the second year must find one internship during the summer (12-16 weeks) between the second and the third years of their studies and one final internship (16 weeks) just before graduation. You can choose an internship which will be in line with your chosen option. There are some rules in regard to the possibility of an internship in France, this depends on the student's home country. First-year students also have other internships during the year.

Studying in French

At Ecole all courses are taught in French. Therefore, a good understanding of the language is necessary for full participation in the courses and activities. The advised level for tertiary education is B2. Foreigners will start a course of French as a second language (FLE – *Français Langue Étrangère*) from the very beginning of their studies.

If you don't speak French, it is **strongly advised** that you should start learning the language as soon as possible. You should learn as much as you can, this will make your life in France easier; the advised minimum level of French at the time of arrival at a language summer school in France is A2. Possibly, you would want to take an intensive summer course of the French language at one of the training centres in France or in your home country. A lot of information is also available on the internet (online courses, audio and video fragments intended to help improve your listening and pronunciation skills).

Course materials and textbooks

Generally, course materials are supplied by the school before the beginning of the course. Usually, these are books or sets of handouts written by the lecturer(s) and other teachers of the course and published at the school. They arrive in the pigeon holes (letterboxes). Some extra materials (for example, exam questions of the previous year, answers and/or solutions to problems treated in class) can be found at the SGS page of the course.

Exams and Marks

Most exams are written and are in French. For some courses the exams can be oral with theoretical questions and/or problem solving, or in the form of a presentation of your work (individual or in a group). Some professors may allow you to use English but this is rare. To compensate language difficulties, dictionaries are often permitted during the exams. The latter are mostly evaluated on a 20-point scale and a mark is assigned in the range A, B, C, D (pass) or F (fail). If a student takes the exam he/she failed for a second time and passes it, he/she is given the mark E.

The number of courses to be taken each semester is determined in such a way so that the students should get a total of 60 ECTS (credits) during the academic year. The value of a course in ECTS depends on its duration; as a rough rule 1 credit equals 10 lessons of 1 hour 15 minutes. The average mark is weighted by the so called coefficients (which often, but not always, are the same as ECTS credits) average of the examination results (A is 4 points, B - 3, C - 2, D - 1 and E is 0). To validate the semester, the average mark should be greater or equal to C (or 2 points). Some courses like sport give supplementary ECTS points which can slightly change your final result, but they cannot be used to get the necessary minimum of points.

For the AST there is an exclusive offer to transfer additional points (not from supplementary courses!) from S3 to S4. Authorized maximum is 3 points.

Note: admission exams can be in English.

Term dates and holidays

There are two semesters: September to January and February to June. At the end of the year the students have a two-week Christmas vacation. Besides, during the semesters there are also several public holidays, some days are reserved for school-specific extra-curricular activities. A detailed timetable is available at <http://mines-paris.eu/> - the site of the Mines ParisTech students.

Employment after graduation

Mines ParisTech students will have an excellent chance of finding jobs in the shortest time possible having graduated from one of the best graduate engineering schools in France and having taken the internships during their studies. Sometimes it is possible to continue working with the company chosen for an internship.

Documents and organisational issues

Contact details

Contact information (Telephone numbers, email addresses) for the staff and students can be easily found on the [school's website](#) (in French – section *annuaire*).

General questions can be addressed to Mr. Pierre Baladi by writing to pierre.baladi@mines-paristech.fr.

During the first day at the school

During the first day at the school, there will be a welcome meeting where you will receive important information about the school and your courses and will be invited to submit necessary documents (such as the application forms for health insurance for the year ahead), and to pay the annual fee. You will need to have documents with you – your passport or other national ID; and to know your address in Paris. It is also **advisable** to have a cheque book to simplify payments.

School Administration

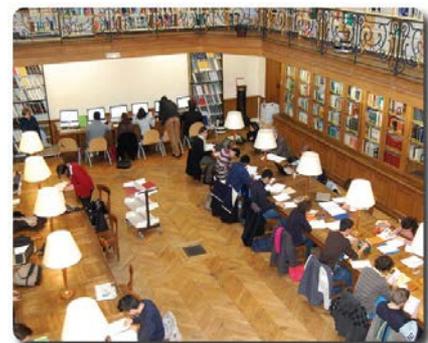
It is the administration who is concerned for the part with studies (as opposed to research, which is also conducted at the school). Thus, for example, if you have problems with a course you should address your requests to here. The management is also in charge of the choice of options (minors).

Fees

The school charges a fee for education. Scholarship holders, students, involved in partnership programmes (for example, double diploma), are exempt from paying this fee. For further information please visit the web site.

The school ID Card

Each student of the Ecole des Mines will receive a personal ID card (about two weeks after the arrival) which may be required to prove the status of a student (for example, if you wish to apply for a public transport pass) and to enable you to access some services you may want to use in school. One of the most significant possibilities you will get with the ID card is to enter the school's library, which has a large collection of textbooks, periodicals and other literature. The student card also provides a lot of price reductions (you can check for details here <http://www.isic.fr/>).



*The school library
Credit Photo MINES ParisTech*

Computing: Accounts, E-mail

Each student has a personal account for the purpose of using school's IT services. Several computer rooms are available in the school; when they are not occupied for teaching purposes, they are in open access. Your account is linked to your official email (firstname.lastname@mines-paristech.fr) where all the official letters about courses, assignments and other matters will be sent. Besides the email service, with your login you can access your courses page on the SGS system in order to choose courses, view your marks, use “Campus” - the online e-learning system or fulfilling any other tasks (<https://campus.mines-paristech.fr/>).



Credit Photo CCSI / MINES ParisTech

Once you start your study, the school will create an email account for you. It is recommended that you should use some email application or mail redirection service, otherwise the letters can be displayed incorrectly. You can ask other people about the settings.

Immigration – Before arriving

If you are a foreigner, you will probably need to obtain a French visa before you arrive. For that, the school can provide you with the documents you may need, for example, your certificate of admission.

It is a **good idea** to bring some common documents as well as their translations and copies: your passport or other official ID, but also the birth certificate, medical documents (vaccination card) etc. This will save you time with the formal proceedings.

Have a look at the specific section at the web: <http://www.mines-paristech.eu/Resources/>

After arrival

Also see the section First day at the school.

Depending on the visa, you may need to register after your arrival at the OFII (French Office of Immigration and Integration) – www.ofii.fr, and pass a short medical examination. The OFII may ask you for additional documents – for example, a French translation of the Birth certificate or a vaccination card (also see below for possible problems with OFII).

Traducteur assermenté. Official organisations (the CAF or the OFII, for instance) may request a certified translation of documents (eg. the birth certificate) – these translators are referred to as *traducteur assermenté*. A list of registered translators in accordance with the language and location is at <http://annuaire-traducteur-assermente.fr>.

During your stay in France you will most likely need to renew your visa which you can either do yourself or through the school (more precisely, through the Administration of Studies). There will be a number of documents to be submitted (which are not hard to obtain) and an application form.

Last piece of information. It is advisable that you find a suit in September or earlier for the events like “Parrainage” in October and internships.

Student associations

BDE

BDE – *Bureau des élèves* (student union). The Bureau des Elèves is a student association, maintaining the relations between the students and the Administration of Studies (*Direction des Etudes*, school administration dealing with educational issues), and participating in the extra-curricular activities. The BDE itself is comprised of around 20 members: a president, a vice-president and several activity groups.

For example, the group of the "office" organises other unions: the group that deals with the events held at the Maison des mines (the main hall of residence), the one that organises group outings for students... Among the other activities of the student union are cooperation with companies - organisation of mock interviews, presentations and discussions; running the "Octo" bar at "-1" (lower ground floor) and the students' own weekly journal "Vendôme". At last but not least – the organisation of trips and cooperation with other ParisTech schools. The BDE also supports student clubs and associations of the school and manages the students' web site: www.mines-paris.eu

At that site you can find a lot of interesting information on such things as "Petit cours" or "Abatage".

ASTI

This is the association engaged in helping international students who have just arrived. They organise welcome events, provide buddies – students of the same year, who can help newly arrived students to understand the working process in the school as well as make suggestions on extra-curricular activities or provide the answers to any questions a newcomer might have about life in Paris. So you will meet the ASTI students during your first day(s) at the school and don't hesitate to ask them any question you have!

Sport

All students have the opportunity to take part in sporting activities. There is a wide range of sports being offered, two days a week are reserved for students to go in for sports. Being a part of a school sports team, students get the chance to represent their school at competitions with Paris-based and other teams. Tournaments, inter-university (inter-école) and inter-promo (between students of different years) competitions are held regularly.

Life outside of the school

Accommodation

There are two main places where students live. The first one is the Maison des Mines, the main accommodation for the French and international students as well – this is a hall of residence intended primarily for the Ecole des Mines but a small number of places is also allocated to other ParisTech schools. It is located in the heart of the city, in the “Quartier Latin” (near the Sorbonne and other Parisian tertiary education sites) approximately five minute walk from the school. Rooms are usually to be shared with another student; before you move in, you will be asked to complete a small questionnaire on your habits so that people living in one room have similar habits. Activities, organized by the student associations, are most often held here. Prices and additional information are at <http://www.maisondesmines.com/>

Note: If someone sends a parcel to you, you will have a notice in your mail box and you will be able to collect it from the reception.

The second location is the Cité Universitaire, a large area with many buildings on it, meant to accommodate students (as well as young scientists, artists and sportspeople). The school has some reserved rooms – you will be informed of the availability should you want to apply for these. If your home country is represented at the Cité (for the full list of houses visit the website), you can also apply to live in your country's house. The Cité is located in the south of Paris (14th district), the journey to the school takes about 10-15 minutes by the RER (*réseau express régional* - suburban trains which are linked to Metro); besides, there are also bus services provided. The Cité offers bigger rooms than those by the Maison des Mines, usually meant for one person; they are also more expensive though. Housing to reserve is limited, so it is advisable to apply for accommodation early to secure a room. Exact prices for each of the houses are available at www.ciup.fr in French or www.ciup.fr/en/ in English.

The third possibility is renting a room, apartment or studio/shared room, apartment or studio on the open market. Prices vary according to location and room quality (size, furnished or not, bills included or not etc).

For all types of accommodation it is possible to receive financial aid from the CAF (see below). The prices (as of may 2011) are approximately as follows: the Maison des Mines – 250-300 euros per month, Cité Universitaire – 500 euros. With the aid of the CAF (which depends on the resources you had in the previous years and type of accommodation), usually of approx. 100-150 euros this will cost you around 150 for the Maison des Mines and 400 euros per month for the Cité Universitaire.

Scholarships

There is a certain number of scholarships available for covering living costs. Among these are scholarships granted by the French government (“Eiffel”), the government of the region Ile-de-France, some industrial companies and others. But as deadlines are often tight (and you should often apply for the scholarship long time before the start of the academic year), be sure to apply in time. Apart from that, the école also has some external scholarships available.

Student discounts and aid (CAF etc)

Most students are offered financial aid to partially cover their accommodation expenses. This is done through the CAF (*Caisse des allocations familiales*) office of the arrondissement where you will live. The amount provided depends on the revenue you have had over the past time, the cost and type of accommodation. A calculator is available (in French) on the CAF website www.caf.fr - click on *Etudiants*, then *Aide au logement*, then *Calculez votre aide*.

At the beginning of the academic year the CAF (as well as other organizations such as insurance companies) have temporary information desks at the CROUS building, RER station Port-Royal and at the Cité Universitaire.

If you should need to travel regularly on the Parisian regional public transport network, you may want to buy an annual student pass which is called “Imagine R” (<http://www.imagine-r.com>). It offers approx. 50% reduction on the standard fare as well as other bonuses. To obtain this pass, an application form has to be filled in and sent to the Imagine R agency.

For students planning rail journeys further than Ile-de-France, it is very advisable that they buy a “Carte 12-25” for the SNCF. As its name suggests, it is a discount card (can reach up to 60% discount) for young people aged 12-25. You can buy it even on your first day in France if you have an intention to use train (for example in Gare de Lyon).

Food

There are several places where you can have lunch: you can find a wide choice of cafes and restaurants situated near the school, the university restaurants and, of course, you can make your meal at home.

Along Boulevard Saint-Michel, where the Ecole is located, students can find a large choice of different cafes, serving fast food (sandwiches, kebabs, etc), as well as offering “dine-in” options with full meals. There are also a lot of restaurants and cafes serving national cuisines.



*Le Cafeteria de la CIUP
Copyright CIUP / Loïc Molon*

Several (14 in 2010) University Restaurants (*Restaurants universitaires, resto U.*), run by CROUS of Paris (*Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires de Paris*), situated in different places around the city, are at the students' service. They offer good quality meals at relatively low prices (about 3 euros). One of these, Restaurant Bullier, is situated within approximately 7-minute walk from the school, down boulevard Saint Michel, at the RER B station Port-Royal (39 avenue Georges Bernanos, 5th). Another restaurant, not run by CROUS, but offering a similar range of meals at similar prices, is located at the Maison Internationale of the Cité Universitaire (RER B, station Cité Universitaire; directly behind the gates of the Cité when coming out of the RER).

Here is an approximate range of prices: a sandwich in a street cafe – 3-5 euros, a standard meal at a university restaurant – 3 euros, meal at a “traditional” restaurant – starting at 10 euros.

Supermarkets and small “express” versions of them can be found throughout the city.

Healthcare

For your healthcare needs, all students participate in the student healthcare plan (run by one of the agencies LMDE or SMEREP). Upon subscription, students will have to choose a general practitioner. Prescribed medications as well as over-the-counter ones are available in pharmacies, which are marked with a green sign of cross. Most chemist's are open from Monday to Saturday but a few are also open on Sundays and at night – see the Addresses section.

Emergencies

In case of Emergency call the European emergency number – 112 or

Fire brigade – 18

Ambulance (SAMU) – 15

Police – 17

Getting to Paris

Paris has two major airports – Roissy Charles de Gaulle and Orly which are both within one hour of the school by public transport (train or bus) and less by taxi. As for the railways, there are several big stations which generally are related to a particular region or direction where the trains head. All of them are located close to the city centre and hence close to the school.

To get to the centre from the Charles de Gaulle airport by public transport, take the RER B line or the “RoissyBus” (runs to the Opera in the centre of Paris). To get to the école, take the RER B and get off at the station “Luxembourg”, exit “Jardin de Luxembourg” then walk down the boulevard St Michel a couple of minutes. When in need to reach the Maison des Mines, take the other exit to Rue de l'Abbé de l'Épée, walk down this street to Rue Saint Jacques where the building is located.

From Orly there are also ways of getting to Paris. The first one is to take the “OrlyBus” which will terminate at the metro/RER station Denfert-Rochereau and then take the local city transport (bus, metro or RER) to your destination. The second way is to travel by the OrlyVal (light rail service between the airport and the Antony station on the RER B) and then the RER B as described above.

Telephones

The international telephone code of France is 33.

Usually, French telephone numbers includes 10 figures, starting with a 0 – this is the way they should be dialed from another french telephone. Phone numbers in Paris (landline) begin with 01. But in order to call France from abroad, the leading zero has to be omitted, thus, for example, to reach a fixed phone number in Paris one should dial “33 1” and the remaining 8 numbers (some differences are possible depending on the dialing rules in different countries).

Public and Mobile Phones

Public telephones are available on Parisian streets. Some, but far from all, accept coins; most of them accept special pre-purchased calling cards (found in tobacco shops, for example). Calling emergency numbers or directory enquiries is free and does not require any cards or coins.

When it comes to mobile phones, there are several major operators available to choose from, and a range of smaller operators as well. Often it is possible to use your telephone brought from abroad and even the phone number (that is, keep the foreign sim card). For the latter, you should remember that this is usually more expensive than making local calls from a local fixed or mobile phone. French mobile phone operators usually offer both pre-paid pay-as-you-go and subscription (most often for one or two years) options.

Security and Personal Safety

Paris is not a dangerous or criminal city, but still precautions must be taken. For example, do not leave your room open when going out. Pay attention to your belongings – bags, mobile phones and wallets in public transport, pickpockets are also present in the tourist places.

Banking

Having a bank account is necessary for many common tasks – health insurance, transferring money etc. It is generally **advisable** to have a chequebook and a bank card (*carte bleue*). The school and other organisations will often (and from the very beginning) ask for your “RIB” (*relevé d'identité bancaire*) – a standard set of your bank account details (account number, branch name etc). It can be received in the bank office or printed out from the internet using your personal internet banking service. Many banks have interesting offers (about 100 euros) for opening an account at the beginning of the school year (i.e. mostly in October).

It takes about two weeks to open account in a bank. You will be expected to present some documents such as attestation of your residence and to sign some papers. Thereafter you will receive several letters which are to be used to finish the procedures.

How to [write a cheque](#):



This is an example of [how to write a cheque](#) in France. Try not to leave free spaces and don't forget about signature!

Bicycles

Travelling by bike is quite popular in Paris. Two options are generally available – having your own bike or renting it. If you choose the first one, there is a bicycle parking near most places. As for the second option, there is a large network of bicycle rental stations called *Velib* throughout Paris and the surrounding area. They offer different rates depending on the usage frequency and the time period which the bike is taken for. For further information, visit www.velib.paris.fr. On many streets special bicycle lanes can be found.

Also you can have a bike of your own. La Meuh has a little garage where you can keep it. Public transport in Paris and Ile-de-France

Paris has a vast network of public transport – metro (the underground), RER (réseau express régional, suburban railway, running in Ile-de-France), buses and trams. Most services within Paris are operated by the RATP – www.ratp.fr. Tickets can be purchased for a single journey (the *t+* ticket), for 1 day or a longer period (1 week, 1 month or 1 year) – these last ones are called Navigo passes.

To save on travel, consider buying a pack of 10 single *t+* tickets (*carnet*) – this option offers a discount of around 20%. The rules, applied to ticketing in 2010, state that a ticket for a single journey is valid for line changes but only within the same type of transport (metro/RER or bus/tram). The 7 day period for weekly tickets starts on Monday and for a monthly ticket – on the first day of the month.

For longer journeys within Ile-de-France, train (“Transilien”, www.transilien.fr – full content in French, a limited version in English) and bus services are available. Fares depend on the zones (the region is divided into 6 zones, Paris being zone 1). If you are under 26 years old and wish to travel during weekends and public holidays, you can buy the “Ticket Jeunes Weekend”, which is valid for one whole day and is cheaper compared to normal one-way tickets for long journeys and the usual daily ticket
Note: this ticket is not valid when using the express buses OrlyBus and RoissyBus services to get to the airports as well as RER services to get to Charles de Gaulle and OrlyVal services to Orly airport.



Night buses – named Noctilien – run between 12.30am and 5.30am, serving all RER stations. Ticketing is based on the usual *t+* tickets; Navigo passes can be used within their respective zones of validity.

Tickets can be purchased at stations, major bus stops, tram stops (often through vending machines that accept coins and credit cards), as well as in some shops marked with the RATP sign. For further information on tickets, zone maps and timetables refer to www.ratp.fr and www.transilien.fr.

Note: RER and metro are almost the same thing, therefore you can go from any RER station to any metro station and vice-versa. Having used a ticket for the first time, you can use it more times during other 30 minutes. You should not throw away your ticket – you are to use it when changing

lines or leaving them.

Note : on the RER network t+ tickets are only valid for travel within zones 1 and 2!

Public transport within France

France has a large network of trains, including many TGV (*train à grande vitesse* – high speed train) lines as well a network of air lines, departing from the Parisian airports. Trains are operated by the French National Railway Company, SNCF. Details of railway lines, an itinerary search engine and ticket prices can be found at www.voyages-sncf.com.

Tickets can be bought on the internet, at a SNCF shop or at a railway station.

When it comes to buying a ticket you should be aware that there's a range of fares in France and some of them such as fares for youth or week-end ones can made price cheaper.

Note: When bought, the ticket has to be stamped.

Electricity

The voltage in France, as in the whole of Europe, is 220 volts, AC, frequency of 50 Hz. So if you would like to continue using electrical appliances, computers or other devices equipped with a different plug or designed for a different voltage, you will need to obtain a suitable adaptor.

Insurance

All students will have the standard Student Health Insurance plan, which starts on October 1 and covers a certain percentage of the treatment and medications costs. This is a standing rule established for all students, both French and international and serving their best interests. You may also want to purchase additional coverage – have a look at one of the insurer's websites (for example, LMDE and SMEREP).

During your first days at school you will be offered a health insurance plan to subscribe to. It is provided by the school for the period of time when students are going to be involved in activities organized by the school.

Note: If you need reimbursement for medicine, you should have doctor prescription, medicine packaging and so called “feuille de soins” document! (look for details in relative sources)

Entertainment

Paris is a city where everyone can find something interesting to discover. Whatever you like, there are activities for everyone - ranging from historical sightseeing and theatres to night clubs and sports.

The school's student union regularly organizes social events which include sporting events, outings, events in the main hall of residence – the Maison des Mines (Mines house): discotheques, diners, cocktail parties etc. You are sure to find a lot of night clubs around the city, and of course in student's surroundings of the Quartier Latin.

The city has many museums and exhibition centres - some of these are listed in the Addresses section. You may like to start with the well-known landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame de Paris and then move on to the less known but definitely interesting, monuments and

museums around the city. The Ile-de-France region has a rich history and you can visit remarkable sights such as the mansions or castles (*château*) around Paris, one of the best and well-known being the Château de Versailles, located just 45 minutes by RER away from the Paris city centre. Students are offered special rates in many museums (often the admission is free), so make sure you have your student card with you.

Shopping

There are many shops and shopping centres in the city, ranging from small family-run bakeries to huge department stores. Near the école, there are also supermarkets, electronics stores and other shops. Some larger shopping centres are located closer to the administrative border of the city of Paris (it is approximately 20-30 minutes way from the centre by metro).

Some useful addresses

This section provides some ideas of where shops, post offices etc. can be found. It is not exhaustive, hence many others can be found close to your residence or a little further away.

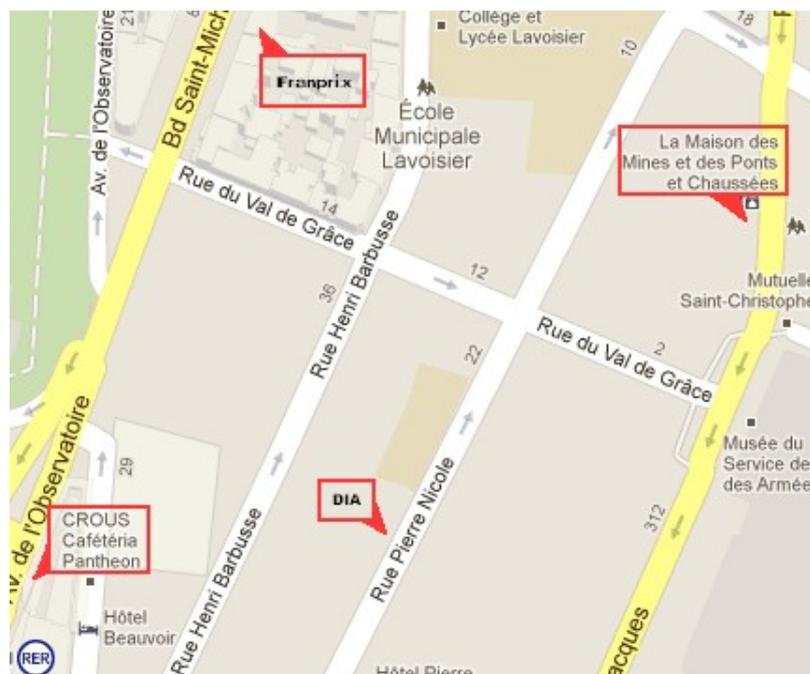
Supermarkets / Groceries

Smaller local supermarkets :

- ◆ Franprix – 121 Boulevard St Michel
- ◆ Dia (ED) – 30 Rue Pierre Nicole, 75005
- ◆ and others...

Larger supermarkets (for a full and up-to-date list, consult the relevant chain's website) :

- ◆ Carrefour Market Monge – 34 rue Monge, 75005
- ◆ Carrefour Market Saint Marcel – 67 Boulevard St Marcel 75013
- ◆ Auchan Okabé, Avenue de Fontainebleau, Le Kremlin Bicetre (Metro *Le Kremlin Bicetre*)
- ◆ and many more...



Larger shopping centres :

- ◆ Forum des Halles – RER *Chatelet Les Halles*, Metro stations *Chatelet* and *Les Halles*
- ◆ Italie 2 (has a Carrefour Market) – Metro *Place d'Italie*
- ◆ Les Quatre Temps (has a large Auchan) – Metro line 1 and RER A station *La Défense*

- ◆ etc

Note: Station La Défense (Grande Arche) is located in zone 3; on the RER network t+ tickets are not valid for travel to this station (see above).

A little comparaison

DIA has very low prices and products of quite good quality. And there is a DIA shop near the Maison des Mines where students tend to make their purchases. Prices in Franprix, Monoprix, Casino, Carrefour Market can be lower or higher than those offered in Dia along with the quality and variety of goods which can also be different there.

A big shopping centre like Forum des Halles can provide you with almost everything, although prices can be high. For particular merchandise it is better to look for in respective shops.

Cafes / Snacks

- ◆ Le petit Journal – in front of the school
- ◆ McDonalds and Quick – on the corner of the Luxembourg gardens
- ◆ Brioche Doree – same location
- ◆ etc.

Bakeries

- ◆ L'Epi d'Or – 298 rue Saint Jacques (50m from the Meuh)
- ◆ L'Artisan Boulanger – rue Saint Jacques
- ◆ etc.

CAF de Paris

- ◆ Centre de gestion "Pot de Fer" (1-6 districts, including the Maison des Mines)
19 Rue du Pot de Fer, 75005
- ◆ Centre de gestion "Finlay" (7, 8, 14, 15, 16 districts, including the Cite Universitaire),
50 rue du Docteur Finlay, 75015 (Metro *Dupleix*)

OFII

- ◆ 48 Rue de la Roquette 75011 Paris

Post Offices

- ◆ 47 Rue d'Ulm, 75005
- ◆ 13 Rue Cujas, 75005
- ◆ Other Post Offices are located throughout the city

Pharmacies

- ◆ Pharmacie St Michel – 71 Boulevard St Michel
- ◆ Pharmacie des facultés – 11 Rue Gay Lussac
- ◆ Pharmacie Périlleux Martine – 38 Rue Gay Lussac
- ◆ Etc.

Pharmacies open 24 hours:

- ◆ 84 avenue des Champs-Élysées, 75008
- ◆ 6 place Clichy 75009
- ◆ etc.



*A French Post Office
Credit Photo La Poste
(laposte.fr)*

Doctors

The choice of an attending doctor is the patient's own choice, regardless of residential address etc. Below there is just one medical centre with the general practitioners (GPs) and specialists on the staff:

- ◆ Centre Médical Radiologique et Dentaire St Michel – 22 Boulevard St Michel, 75006
- ◆ Many other centres can be found throughout the city

In case of a serious health problem :

- ◆ Hôpital Cochin – 123 Boulevard Port Royal, 75014

Some museums and monuments

In Paris :

- ◆ The Louvre
(Metro stations *Palais-Royal- Musée du Louvre* or *Louvre Rivoli*)
- ◆ Musée d'Orsay
(RER C and Metro station *Musée d'Orsay*)
- ◆ Hôtel des Invalides – Museum of the French Army (RER C station *Invalides*)
- ◆ **Panthéon**
(RER B station *Luxembourg*)

- ◆ Notre Dame de Paris
(RER B/C station *Saint-Michel-Notre-Dame* ;
Metro *Saint Michel*)
- ◆ Eiffel Tower - Tour Eiffel
(RER C station *Champ de Mars-Tour Eiffel* ;
Metro *Bir-Hakeim*)
- ◆ Triumphal arch – Place Charles de Gaulle
(Etoile) (RER A and Metro station *Charles de
Gaulle Etoile*)
- ◆ Montmartre, Sacré Cœur
and a little further away :
- ◆ Château de Versailles (RER C station *Versailles
Rive Gauche*)



La Tour Eiffel (Eiffel Tower)

and many other monuments, museums and other sights to discover!

Les journées de patrimoine

These days take place every year on the 3rd weekend of September. Usually impossible to access, these days a lot of interesting places are available for public.

Little tips.

There are a few flea markets in Paris where you can find almost everything you want: consumer goods, rarities etc. Though prices are usually much lower than on markets, sometimes the quality of goods can be very bad.

It is about 1h 30 minutes period of time between the moment of landing in the airport and coming to centre of Paris.

Cl written on bottles means 0,01 litre.

Lifts usually have two buttons. One is aimed at lifting you up, while the other one - at lowering you.

In France people usually buy cell-phones on credit with the operator included. But after the purchase has been made, the credit contract can be changed for a more profitable one (for example, reduction from 48 to 28 euros per month), ask for details in suitable sources.

Be aware that some shops don't work at lunchtime, in the evenings and at night or/and at the weekends.

If you do not belong to Shengen zone, you will have to pass OFII's procedures. In the last two years foreigners have had some problems with them. In July students, studying French in Vichy, sent papers necessary to apply for the convocation taking place in September but they didn't receive any response. More than that, the office didn't respond to any of students' phone calls and letters. In fact, their convocation took place in the very beginning of September but students didn't receive any invitation letters. Thereby, if you didn't receive any letter from OFII, it is recommended that you should go to their office once you arrive in Paris and inquire them directly about convocation.

Also, the students who are about to leave tend to sell the stuff they have (for example, electric stove or mirror) for quite low prices in September; so you can look for notices in the hall of residence or for tripromal letters (letters for 1A, 2A and 3A).

When in France, you will have a lot of new questions so it is advisable that you should reread this guide. It is possible that your questions have already been answered here.