

HOUSING INFO- INSEEC GROUPE

(REFERENCED FROM INSEEC STUDENT GUIDE)

Finding accommodation in Paris

There is a real shortage of accommodation in Paris. Finding a suitable place may require considerable time and energy.

First, you must decide whether you want a furnished apartment (one-year lease) or an unfurnished apartment (three-year lease).

Secondly, you must decide where you want to stay.

Between Paris and the suburbs, an agonizing choice to make...

Based on your budget, duration of stay and needs, you could literally knock on several doors, starting with those in Paris or its suburbs.

Between the much-coveted capital and the often-rejected suburbs, arguments bounce back and forth: outings and cultural activities for Paris, or facility of public transport and a greater choice of housing in the suburbs. The majority of students prefer Parisian life, even if it does mean paying an exorbitant rent, or being squashed into a Lilliputian-sized room...compromises that you will have to take into consideration when you decide!

Searching for housing on your own

Finding housing on your own in Paris is difficult, but not impossible.

The housing problem is particularly acute in Paris where demand exceeds supply and rents are consequently 50% higher than elsewhere in France. To rent a flat (usually unfurnished) you will have to produce documentary evidence that you can afford to pay. Estate agents will require a returnable deposit usually equivalent to two months rent; a month's rent in advance and a commission, ie you will have to pay the Real Estate company.

Students who wish to find their housing outside of the University should be aware of the following:

- The standard security deposit consists of 2 months of rent which, by law, may be returned up to 2 or 3 months after the student's departure
- A letter from the financially responsible person's bank will be needed disclosing financial statements (i.e. copies of parent's pay slips, bank statements, references ...)
- An inventory, or "Etat des lieux", must be filled out by the student and landlord.
- The inventory is your responsibility, and it will be used to determine if any damages will be deducted from your security deposit upon your departure.
- In general, only references and parents who live in France are acceptable. However agencies are accustomed to helping students? They will charge you an agency fee equivalent to approximately one month's rent. The agency fee includes help with telephone, electricity and cable hookup? Students should be prepared to show a copy of their INSEEC confirmation letter or valid student ID and plan to have money available in France. International money transfers usually take more than a week.
- Renting an individual room costs between 229 and 458 Euros in Paris. A studio rent is between 382 and 610 Euros per month.

Relying on the private rental market

- Estate agents

Estate agencies will generally be too expensive for your student budget.

Estate agents' fees are usually the equivalent of one month's rent without utility charges.

Numerous documents need to be provided, and these are carefully scrutinized: your last three payslips, your most recent income tax demand, a photocopy of your identity papers, and a certificate from your employer.

Monthly average rents average 15 Euros per square meter in Paris and 7 Euros per square meter elsewhere in France. The supply of units in privately owned student apartment buildings is rising.

These buildings offer furnished and equipped studios and shared services such as cafeterias, coin laundries, and game rooms. The monthly rent for a studio in such a building is 500 to 700 Euros outside Paris and 550 to 700 Euros in Paris.

• Rentals – Basic Information

When you rent a unit in a private building you will have to sign a rental agreement or lease that specifies your rights and responsibilities and those of the property owner and his agent. Before the lease is signed, you will have to prove that you have sufficient resources to pay the rent. Usually this means that your monthly income must be at least three times the amount of your rent. You will also have to pay a security deposit equal to 2 months' rent.

When assessing your rent level, keep the utility charges in mind, especially the high cost of electric heating. Vacancies are advertised by real estate agencies or directly by property owners in the classified section of newspapers such as *Le Figaro* (which is widely available abroad). Some educational institutions and CROUS offices maintain lists of vacancies.

Leases for unfurnished apartments are generally for three years, renewable or non-renewable. Three months' notice must be sent to the landlord if you wish to leave the apartment before the end of the lease, or one month's notice in case of transfer.

A formal **état des lieux** (inventory of fixtures – walls, floors, furniture, etc.) is drawn up between the landlord and the tenant both when taking possession and when vacating the premises. In the case of

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furnished apartments, for which leases generally run for one year, you also need to draw up an inventory of furnishings.

The landlord is entitled to a **dépôt de garantie** (security deposit), which may not exceed two months' basic rent (without charges). The tenant is entitled to a refund of the deposit no later than two months after returning the keys.

The landlord may also ask the tenant for a **caution** – a person who stands guarantor. Such an agreement should not be entered into lightly in view of the potentially serious consequences for the guarantor. The landlord may also ask for a bank guarantee, whereby you freeze six months' rent or more in a special account.

The tenant is required to take out an **assurance habitation** (housing insurance), including **responsabilité civile locative** (tenant's civil liability), and must renew the **maintenance contracts** (hot water heater, boiler).

The person occupying the premises on 1 January must pay the *taxe d'habitation* (residence tax), which goes to the local authorities.

The landlord may give the tenant notice at the end of the lease only under specific conditions. Six months' notice must be given, by registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt (*lettre recommandée avec accusé de réception*).

If you have any problems to do with electricity, gas or plumbing, contact the landlord or the warden of the building.

Electricity and gas: contact the EDF-GDF agency: 0 810 333 312

Telephone: contact the France Télécom agency: 10 14 or 0 800 10 14 75

• Advice before renting

Do not commit yourself until you have a full knowledge of the rental conditions.

Rent ("loyer") does not include charges like heating and electricity unless specified.

If lodging with the owner, are sheets and showers included? Can you use the kitchen and are there restrictions on when?

Can you have visitors?

The rent is payable before moving in and early each month.

For a flat insist on a written lease once a detailed inventory of the fixtures and the condition of the premises has been drawn up.

Before moving out of a flat, the tenant must send the landlord a registered letter with advice of receipt giving generally one months' notice or three months notice in the case of real estate agencies.

Examples of estate agencies (please see websites below)

Bridgestreet: 21, rue de Madrid – 75008 PARIS Metro Europe

Ph.: + 33 1 42 94 13 13 fax: + 33 1 42 94 83 01 e-mail/website: info@apalachee.com or amanda.tuveri@bridgestreet.com

Lodgis : 16, rue de la Folie Méricourt – 75011 PARIS Metro Oberkampf

Ph.: + 33 1 48 07 11 06 website : <http://www.lodgis.com>

La Compagnie Foncière Européenne : 14, rue Duvivier – 75007 PARIS Metro Ecole Militaire
Ph.: + 33 1 47 05 78 26 e-mail : irispeiker@hotmail.com

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Additional sources of information for finding apartments and studios

Please be aware that the ads placed on bulletin boards throughout Paris or in local newspapers are not screened and that you may encounter difficulty in securing a rental for a short period of time (i.e. one semester, one academic year)

☿ Bulletin boards

The American Church bulletin board at 65, quai d'Orsay – 75007 PARIS

The American Cathedral bulletin board at 23, avenue George V – 75008 PARIS

Danish Church bulletin board at 17, rue Lord Byron – 75008 PARIS

Swedish Church bulletin board at 9, rue Médéric – 75017 PARIS

The Goethe Institute at 17, avenue d'Iéna – 75016 PARIS

Collège des Irlandais at 5, rue des Irlandais – 75005 PARIS

Catholic Institute of Paris at 2, rue d'Assas – 75006 PARIS

☿ Internet sites

They are very numerous, but beware of fraud; never pay to join a list – the services offered are generally non-existent.

The internet can be a valuable resource, but always remember you are dealing with more-or-less unscreened information.

Please try:

☿ Best Housing Sites

<http://www.inter-logement.com>

<http://www.pap.fr>

<http://www.fusac.fr>

<http://www.imip-mbai-paris.com/studyabroad/housing.htm>

This is the housing site of the MBA Institute (sister school of INSEEC). Good advice and telephone numbers related to finding housing in Paris.

<http://www.fusac.com>

Also private sites such as

<http://www.paristay.com>, <http://www.virtual-visit.net>

<http://www.paris-smart-home.com>

☿ Other Housing Websites

-To share accommodation with other students:

<http://www.appartager.com>

<http://www.colocation.fr>

<http://www.kel-koloc.com>

<http://www.placeducampus.com>

<http://www.e-cologis.com>

<http://www.entrepaticuliers.com>

- For private students residences

<http://www.adele.org>

<http://www.campus-habitat.com>

<http://www.estudines.fr>

<http://www.aljt.asso.fr>

<http://www.lodgis.com>

- Estate agencies

<http://www.se loger.com>

<http://www.lodgis.com>

<http://www.parisattitude.com>

<http://www.oeil-fr.com> (Organisation Etudiant International Logement)

<http://www.locaflat.com>

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<http://www.fnaim.fr>

<http://www.laforet.com>

<http://www.123immo.com>

<http://www.hestia.com>
<http://www.century 21.fr>
<http://www.bridgestreet.com>

☞ **Private advertisements in newspapers**

They may put you in direct contact with landlords to avoid having to pay a commission; however, beware of estate agents masquerading as private individuals.

France-USA Contacts (FUSAC): a free French and English newspaper that you will be able to find in all the English shops (e.g. WHSmith, by rue de Rivoli, near Place de la Concorde) and at INSEEC.

De Particulier à Particulier (www.pap.fr) classified ads sold every Thursday in all newspaper stands (most offers are taken by the end of the day), bank guarantees are usually required

Le Figaro

International Herald Tribune

☞ **Living in university housing**

Universities throughout France offer rooms and studio apartments at reduced rates (between 120 to 300 Euros per month) in student residences managed by CROUS, the regional affiliates of the French national student-service agency, known as CNOUS.

Space in these residences is allocated according to certain criteria, with recipients of French government scholarships receiving priority. In Paris, where there are 300,000 students and only 2,000 units of university housing, scholarship students are the only ones who have a chance at getting a room.

Partygoers and late-night birds beware: this kind of accommodation is not for you. Strict rules and regulations are the norms: curfews, regulated visits...

Different types of housing

Residence Halls or university residences

University residences or "cite u" are managed by the CROUS. They are one of the most economical housing solutions in Paris, and are consequently flooded with students. Best to get an early start if you hope to find something here, all the more so given the extremely limited number of places available within Paris: 2.800 places for over 300.000 students!

The academies of Creteil (Seine-et-Marne 77, Seine-Saint-Denis 93, Val-de-Marne 94) or of Versailles (Yvelines 78, Essonne 91, Hauts-de-Seine 92, Val-d'Oise 95), offer a better option as they contain dormitories with 3600 and 10 000 beds respectively.

Please note that these rooms are given out on social criteria and are reserved primarily for scholarship holders, particularly those of the French government.

Standard room in the City U

The regular furnished bedroom is usually located in a building built up in the late 1960s. The bedroom is quite small, with an average size of 10 square meters, and is furnished. You can also use the kitchen, the common bathroom and toilets as well as the study rooms and the meeting rooms.

Or

The recent offer is as follows: comfortable one-bedroom flats, well furnished in good and recent buildings, mostly situated in the Northern and Eastern arrondissements of Paris.

Taking into account present capacity, priority is given to:

- foreign students whose families have been living in France for at least two years, to French government scholarship holders (BGF), to foreign government scholarship holders under

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CROUS administration for their first year of studies. Contact the international office at the CROUS.

- to foreign students studying within the framework an international university exchange programme. Contact your university.

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CROUS de Paris

<http://www.crous-paris.fr/logement/> ☞ List and addresses of Cités U in Paris.

CROUS de Créteil

http://www.crous-creteil.fr/logement/logement_crous.htm ☞ List of Cités U.

CROUS de Versailles

http://www.crous-versailles.fr/resid_univ.php ☞ List of Cités U of the academy of Versailles.

The Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris

The Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (CIUP) is made up of French and foreign halls of

residence, as well as a number of facilities and services, which provides residents with near ideal accommodation, working and social conditions. The 37 houses, which are spread over a 40 hectare park, accommodate nearly 5600 students, trainees and post doctoral students from over 132 countries. A highly-prized success. It goes without saying that these rooms are greatly sought after. In addition to high quality housing, the Cité Internationale City also offers, a range of facilities and services including, theatre, restaurants, sports areas and libraries.

Applications

The CIUP is open to students once their application has been accepted provided they meet the following requirements:

Students must be under 30.

Their educational level must be at least that of the **second year** at university.

They must be enrolled in an institution of higher education or university under the authority of Paris, Créteil or Versailles academies and studying for a diploma recognised by the State.

Admissions are granted for one year and can be renewed twice.

Australian students seeking a room within one of the halls of the CIUP should address themselves to the: Services des Admissions de la Fondation Nationale, 19 boulevard Jourdan, 75690 PARIS CEDEX 14

Tel: + 33 1 44 16 64 48 Fax: + 33 1 44 16 64 03

Rent

Tariffs differ from one house to another. Count between 282 and 396€ for a single room, if you are student.

Cité Internationale universitaire de Paris

<http://www.ciup.fr/hebergement/> ☞ On-line pre-registration for a room

Private student residences

If you have not been able to find anything at the Cités U or at the Cité Internationale of Paris, you can always turn to private student residences. Faced with the student housing shortage, these residences have developed considerably in the last few years. Here you will find furnished and equipped studios with common living areas: cafeteria, conference room, and laundry.

Note: while the level of comfort here is higher than in university residence halls, the rooms are also more expensive.

Rent

Expensive, it varies between 600 to 680 € per month.

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Egide

<http://www.egide.asso.fr/uk/guide/vivre/loger/residetu/> ☞ Les résidences étudiantes.

☞ Renting and apartment, and sharing or “Flatsharing”

Sharing houses in France is not as developed amongst young people as in the other countries (Germany, England or Australia). Students, much less frequently people already in the active life, are doing so when they come to settle down in a city. However, you do not know many people, this practice is a very good way to create links and to make new relationships.

Egide

www.egide.asso.fr/uk/guide/vivre/loger/residetu/ ☞ Information on accommodation in a home.

<http://www.appartement.org>

<http://www.e-cologis.com>

<http://www.portail-colocation.com>

<http://www.kel-koloc.com>

You will find also ads with Hestia (<http://www.hestia.fr/>) that is specialised in adverts between individuals. After paying a subscription fee (package between 130 and 160 €, for 4 months), you will have access to a large database of up to date offers.

☞ Accommodation with a French family - Homestays / Paying Guests

Tempted to share in the lives of a French family, and get a taste of Parisian living?

In return for a varying rent – varying between 600 to 1000€, according to the arrangement, or a few hours of baby sitting- you will be put up with a family, who more often than not include breakfast and dinner as part of the deal.

Much more appropriate for short stays, this kind of arrangement will hamper your independence.

Some organisations in France can arrange for homestays in French families at a slightly higher price than university accommodation. This type of accommodation has its benefits as it helps foreign

students to integrate into the French way of living. The organisations below are already established agencies which can help students or tourists to locate a suitable French family where in exchange for boarding fees, they will be housed and fed.

The Alliance Française of Paris, 101, bvd Raspail (6e), tel. 01 42 84 90 00, offers a computerized service with ads to find an accommodation or temporary job. Every day except Saturday, Sunday and holidays, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

L'accueil familial des Jeunes Etrangers (Family hostel for young female students), 23, rue du Cherche Midi, 75006 Paris tel. + 33 1 42 22 50 34.

France Accueil Contacts, 3 rue du Colonel Moll, 75017 PARIS, + 33 1 45 00 45 51.