



IBENS

Institut de Biologie de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure

WELCOME BOOKLET

INSTITUT DE BIOLOGIE DE L'ENS



Instituts
thématiques



Inserm

Institut national
de la santé et de la recherche médicale

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Arriving in France

The essential steps:

- Work contract and "convention d'accueil"
- Getting a residence permit
- Registering with the Social Insurance system
- Getting voluntary health insurance
- Opening a bank account
- Accommodation

Some useful sites:

[Cité Universitaire Internationale](#)

[Science Accueil](#)

[Mission d'accueil de l'INSERM](#)

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[CNRS délégation Paris B](#)

Visa (before arriving in France)

This document is required for all non-European citizens (and for citizens of Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic). The laboratory hosting your stay as a confirmed researcher/Ph.D. student/post-doctoral research assistant will request a "convention d'accueil" from the human resources department of the organisation to which they report (Ecole normale supérieure, CNRS, INSERM, University for Ph.D. students). This scientific "convention d'accueil" can only be obtained for holders of a Masters degree (or equivalent) who are coming to France to fill a "scientific" post. The convention must be approved by the institutional and police authorities, then it is sent directly to you. The whole procedure may take up to one month; please keep this in mind when applying for your visa.

With this document you can apply for a "long-stay scientific visa" (more than three months) at the French embassy in your country.

Residence permit

This document is required for all non-European citizens (and for citizens of Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic) who wish to stay in France for more than three months. You must start the procedure to obtain your residence permit **within two months of arriving in France**. Completion of the procedure can take several months. Until the actual permit is delivered, you will be provided with a receipt of application authorising you to work in France.

Warning: the residence permit must be renewed when it expires and at each change of contract. You are advised to start the application process at least three months before these events occur.

To obtain a residence permit from the Prefecture upon arrival in France, please contact one of the following (depending on the organisation paying your salary):

- CNRS, Délégation Paris B: Ms. Delphine THIRIOT, delphine.thiriot@dr2.cnrs.fr (01 42 34 94 12)
- INSERM, Délégation Paris XII, Ressources Humaines (director: Mr. Hubert Grillot): Ms. Sylviane ALVES, sylviane.alves@inserm.fr (01 45 17 29 58)
- ENS, service des Ressources Humaines (director: Mr. Jean-Marie Canosi), teaching personnel office: Mr. Gilles DRUILHE, Gilles.Druilhe@ens.fr (01 44 32 29 47)
- UPMC (Ph.D. students): Julia Franke, julia.franke@upmc.fr, foreign students' reception (bureau d'accueil des étudiants étrangers)

If you live within central Paris (Postcode 75XXX), the procedure can be undertaken by the human resources departments of the research institutions. Otherwise, you will need to go to your local sub-prefecture (this can take longer).

Documents required to obtain a residence permit, **to be sent to the administrative assistant for your team who will forward your application to the appropriate institute**: (if you live outside Central Paris, you will have to use these documents to make the application yourself)

- Original of the "convention d'accueil" sent to you by your employer
- 4 passport-size photographs
- 1 copy of your passport
- 1 copy of your scientific visa
- proof of address (if you are staying with someone, a letter from the person you are staying with and a copy of their national identity card)
- original birth certificate and its translation (by a sworn translator¹)
- diploma/degree
- if the applicant is married, marriage certificate and its translation (by a sworn translator)
- if the applicant is divorced, copy of the divorce decree and its translation (by a sworn translator)

Documents to be added in some cases:

For those on short-term contracts: copy of the contract

For scientists accompanied by their spouse and/or children:

- translation of the marriage certificate (by a sworn translator)
- translation of the children's birth certificates (by a sworn translator)

Once the paperwork has been sent to the Prefecture, you will receive a letter inviting you to a medical examination organised by the Agence Nationale d'Accueil des Etrangers et des Migrations (ANAEM). This medical exam is mandatory to obtain your residence permit.

¹ Traducteur assermenté

Renewing your residence permit: the procedure and the documents to be provided are the same as those for the initial application. The procedure must be started three months before the current residence permit expires.

Social Insurance

The aim of the Social Insurance system Sécurité Sociale in terms of health is to guarantee that all or part of your medical expenses are covered. Upon joining the scheme, you will be given a Social Insurance number (your identification) and a card (Vitale), these are the elements necessary for you and your family to be reimbursed for your medical expenses.

For each medical procedure, for example a visit to your general practitioner, the system has defined a fee known as "the Social Insurance rate". Thus, each medical intervention is identified and "rated". Based on this, the Social Insurance system has defined a scale for reimbursement. As a rule, this scale entitles you to reimbursement of between 15 and 80% of costs. The difference between the amount paid and the reimbursement from the Social Insurance system is paid by the person or by their voluntary health insurance scheme, if they have one. Beware that some doctors charge more than the Social Insurance Rate.

Undergraduates and Ph.D. students

1) There is a student Social Insurance scheme, eligibility for which is determined by age. You must be under 28 on 1 October of the year of study. However, this limit may be adjusted for students studying for their doctorate, undertaking medical studies, or for medical reasons.

To be eligible, you must register with a higher-level teaching institution which has signed up to the student scheme (such as ENS or Pierre and Marie Curie University). Most higher-level institutions have signed up to the scheme, but we nevertheless recommend that you check, as some schools or institutes have not.

For foreign students, an appropriate residence permit for residence in France is required.

If these three conditions are met, you can enrol in the student Social Insurance scheme (RESS) for the school year

You will be covered by the Social Insurance system for a moderate fee (cost of adhesion in 2011/2012 = €203 per year).

You will have the choice between the **SMEREP** (<http://www.smerep.fr/>) and the **Mutuelle des étudiants** (LMDE) (<http://www.lmde.com/>)

Special case: Ph.D. students who have a work contract do not need to sign up for the student Social Insurance scheme, as contributions are retained at source on their salary.

2) If you are over 28 on 1 October, you are a non-EU national (countries outside the European Economic Area) and you do not have an exemption:

You are not entitled to the student Social Insurance scheme.

Once you have been present for three months in France, the CPAM, Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie (Metropolitan France), or the CGSS, Caisse Générale de Sécurité Sociale (overseas territories) will consider your paperwork.

You will find the address of your local CPAM or CGSS on the Social Insurance system's website www.ameli.fr

3) Other cases:

3.1 - You are a resident of a member state of the European Economic Area or Switzerland and you are hosted by a French higher-level teaching institute: with a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) provided by the Social Insurance system in your country of origin, valid for your whole university year, you are entitled to cover by the French Social Insurance system (at no additional cost).

3.2 - You are registered as a student in Quebec: you benefit from the reciprocal agreement between the French Social Insurance system and the Régie Assurance Maladie Québec (RAMQ).

You should contact your local CPAM or CGSS with your documents and an application form. (A list of addresses can be found on the Social Insurance system's website: www.ameli.fr)

3.3 - You are coming to France for an international exchange which will last less than three months: you are not entitled to cover by the French student Social Insurance scheme.

Researchers

Health insurance is necessary for all stays in France. What form it takes depends on your status.

You are paid by a French company or organisation

Getting insured

If you are paid by a French company or organisation, you will automatically be affiliated to a general Social Insurance scheme. You will need to request your identification number. To do so, you must contact the Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie (CPAM) nearest where you live (<http://www.ameli.fr/>).

Insuring your family

When you are affiliated to the Social Insurance system, you can request cover for your "beneficiaries" (i.e., those that live with you and are financially dependent on you: spouse, common-law spouse, descendant, ascendant, etc.).

You are covered by medical insurance in another European country

If you are covered by the Social Insurance system in another European Union country, you must request a European Health Insurance Card before coming to France if you are staying for a short period and then returning to your country. If you are permanently changing your country of residence, and/or you do not yet know where you will be resident when you leave France, you must request transfer of your cover (using form E104). This will allow you to be covered by the Social Insurance scheme for general care during your stay in France.

Your country has signed an agreement with France for mutual Social Insurance cover

If you are not paid by a French company or organisation but you are insured in a state with which France has a reciprocal agreement for illness and maternity cover, you will be

covered by the French Social Insurance system. All you have to do is to request a letter from the appropriate authority in your country.

A list of states who have signed Social Insurance agreements with France has been compiled by the CLEISS: <http://www.cleiss.fr/docs/textes/index.html>

Other cases

If you are not paid by a French company or institution, not a holder of a European Health Insurance Card, and are not entitled to cover through a mutual agreement, you must sign up to a private health insurance scheme, at least for the first three months of your stay.

To keep in mind

Three months after your arrival in France (or upon arrival if your home institute has a cooperation agreement with the French institute where you will be hosted), you may request universal health cover, or [Couverture Maladie Universelle \(CMU\)](#), through the Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie (CPAM).

To be eligible for CMU you may be a French or foreign national, with or without a fixed abode. If you have been legally resident in France for over three months and are not yet covered by a Social Insurance scheme, you can ask to be covered by the basic universal health scheme (CMU). Signing up for the basic CMU scheme may be free or fee-paying, depending on your income. The CMU scheme entitles you to reimbursement of medical acts and medications at the usual rates applied for those covered by the Social Insurance system. Signing up to the CMU scheme is free for households with an annual income below **9 164 euro** between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012.

Voluntary health insurance

You are strongly advised to complement your Social Insurance reimbursement by signing up for voluntary health insurance. This will limit your health costs. Your voluntary health insurance will cover all or part of the difference between the Social Insurance reimbursements and what you pay for medical acts. Compare the guarantees carefully, in particular for contingency coverage (benefit in case of lost working days, complement in case of invalidity, etc.), and check what your rights are if your situation changes (e.g. job change or termination of activity).

Examples of voluntary health insurance companies:

[MGEN](#), [MAGE](#), [MGAS](#), [mutuelle familiale](#)

The referring physician

You must choose and declare a referring physician. You may choose a general practitioner or a specialist. We suggest that you choose the doctor that knows you best. Your referring physician is your key contact. By consulting them first for a health problem, you can benefit from centralised medical follow-up and personalised prevention.

Warning: if you have not declared a referring physician, or if you consult a specialist directly (apart from specialists for whom direct access is permitted without a referral from your referring physician), the Social Insurance system will reimburse you at a lower rate.

Accommodation

Accommodation in Paris is difficult to find, we therefore advise you to contact the addresses given in the "accommodation" document on the intranet as rapidly as possible.

Sites to consult (tenant's rights, general information, home insurance, etc.):

[Le guide du locataire du CNRS](#)
[Le guide de la Fondation Kastler](#)
[Science Accueil](#)

Help with finding accommodation:

Consult: <http://www.actionlogement.fr/> (free loans covering tenant's deposit) and the CAF <https://www.caf.fr/wps/portal> for housing benefits.

If you are under 30 and you are not on a permanent contract, you may be entitled to:

- a guarantee covering payment of rents and service charges if you are unable to do so
- an interest-free loan covering the tenant's deposit: www.locapass.fr

NB: some health insurance companies provide letters of guarantee or loans for costs related to moving in. Ask yours for information!

Opening a bank account

If you are a foreign researcher and you wish to open an account in a French bank there are several options available:

- the Fondation Kastler has negotiated a specific offer with the Société Générale for foreign scientists. Further details of this offer are available on the [Fondation Kastler](#) website. To open a bank account, all you have to do is fill out the [form](#) to request a Fondation Kastler host scientist's card (the card is free), and then to follow the instructions here: http://www.fnak.fr/dn_Banque

- the ENS also has a partnership with the Société Générale (38, rue Gay Lussac, 75005 Paris). Ask for Mr. Benmouhoub (01 56 81 04 83). This allows you to open an account immediately.

- For teachers and researchers, the Crédit Mutuel des Enseignants (69, boulevard Saint Germain) allows you to open an account immediately. On request, it is possible to get an overdraft of 700€ until the first salary is paid, without incurring bank charges. Contact: Mrs. Eva Sellami (08 20 37 20 20)

Documents to provide when opening an account:

- identification (national identity card or passport) and a photocopy
- visa
- proof of address (rent receipt, utility bill, etc.). If the person is staying with someone and not paying rent: a letter from the person they are staying with + photocopy of their identification + utility bill (or other document proving residence)

- work contract and/or "convention d'accueil"

It is advisable to go to the bank with someone who speaks French when opening your account.

French and English courses

At the ENS:

These courses, given by the ECLA department of the Ecole Normale Supérieure are open to ENS researchers and students.

ECLA was set up to encourage members of the ENS to learn living languages and gain insight into different cultures. Language lessons are also a good place to meet others. Foreign students will find courses on French language and civilisation; students and researchers, both of literature and science, can get an introduction to, or improve their knowledge of other languages. Lessons are run in groups or as self-taught modules, thanks to the multimedia laboratory.

All language courses are run in two terms over the school year. A pre-enrolment process is run at the start of each term.

For further information: <http://www.ecla.ens.fr/secretariat.ecla@ens.fr>

01 44 32 32 68

45, rue d'Ulm - Stairwell A, 2nd floor (above the salle des Actes), Paris 5^{ème}

Paris town hall:

The town hall in Paris provides free French lessons for students of all levels. Lessons take place in the evening two or three times per week in schools. There is a high level of demand for these lessons, you should therefore send your form in as soon as enrolments open (in general, mid-September and early January).

For further information: <http://www.cours-municipal-d-adultes-cma.cma-paris.org/>

SPIBENS:

The association of Ph.D. students and post-doctoral research assistants at IBENS offers language exchanges during informal meetings between students and researchers (See: <http://www.biologie.ens.fr/spibens/>)

Getting around Paris

Velib:

This system allows you to borrow a bike at one of a number of stands throughout Paris. The first thirty minutes of your journey are free. Several types of subscription are possible, see: <https://abo-paris.cyclocity.fr/>

Navigo:

The Navigo pass allows you to access the whole public transport network in the Ile-de-France area. You can choose a weekly, monthly or yearly ticket. You can request your Navigo pass by downloading the form from <https://www.navigo.fr/pages/accueil.html> and

sending it by post to the address indicated. This can be done even before your arrival in France.

NB: Your employer may reimburse half the price of your travel pass.

Family life

In France, the school year runs from September to June. Children go to school from the age of 3, and schooling is mandatory until the age of 16.

Crèches

It is very difficult to obtain a place in the state-run crèches in Paris for children between 0 and 3 years of age. You can get all the necessary information on state-run crèches and other childcare options (accredited childminder, family-run crèches, drop-in centres, etc.) at your local PMI (Protection Maternelle et Infantile).

For further information: http://www.paris.fr/portail/Solidarites/Portal.lut?page_id=6188

Schooling

To sign your child up for a state-run school, you must first register them with the schools department of the town hall of your place of residence in France.

To complete the formalities, you must provide:

- the child's passport,
- their birth certificate translated into French,
- proof of address (rental contract, rent receipt, utility bill, etc.),
- the child's health records. The child must be vaccinated against diphtheria, tetanus and polio (DTPolio).

The town hall will tell you which school includes your child in its catchment area, depending on where you live. In general, pre-school starts from 3 years of age, and primary school from 6.

A family allowance (SFT) is available for civil servants and non-tenure staff with at least one child.

The SFT varies depending on the **number of children** in the household.

It consists of:

a **fixed stipend**

a **stipend proportional** to the gross salary, with fixed maximum and minimum amounts.

Please contact your team's administrative assistant to get the SFT request form.