

Welcome book FCPPL



France China Particle Physics
Laboratory

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This welcome book is dedicated to ***Chinese students and visitors coming to France***. You will find below some basic information about French administration, aiming at helping you in your first steps in France.

Note however that detailed & targeted information should be asked to your French local tutor or laboratory admin staff.

Note also that information may also vary with time & location.

Contact Esthere (garnier@c ppm.in2p3.fr) to help us correct, update and enrich this welcome book.

1. Insurances

a. National Health System

The French national health system ("*sécurité sociale*") provides a financial support for your health expenses, provided these ones are recognised by the French health system.

★ If you register to a French University, then registration to NHS is included in your university application, and is carried out through your affiliation to "LMDE" or "MEP", 2 companies offering a comparable basic service for similar prices. You will have to send your local LMDE or MEP agency the following documents:

- copy of your passport
- birth certificate + translation
- copy of your university registration certificate

You will be insured from the date of your university registration.

★ If you have a contract with CNRS or University, you can benefit from the French NHS by registering to MGEN. You will have to send your local MGEN agency the following documents:

- copy of your passport
- copy of your working contract
- bank details (the blue bank sheet) RIB in French
- copy of your birth certificate + translation
- 1st wage slip within 3 months

★ If you have a grant offered by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Eiffel grants or CaiYuanPei program), then staff from the *Campus France* Executive Agency will directly get in touch with you to explain you how to proceed.

Once you are registered to the social security, you will be given a social security number and will receive the Health green card ("*Carte Vitale*"). You won't be charged for the costs covered by the NHS when you show this card at payment time (to the physician, chemist, etc.), and you will have to pay for the complement only.

Until you receive your “*Carte Vitale*”, you will have to pay the full amount of your health expenses. You will get reimbursed by sending to your local security centre the receipt for your payment + appropriate NHS admin paper (ask help for details).

Note: in principle you have to choose a reference physician (*‘médecin traitant’*). It’s not compulsory, but if you don’t, you won’t get reimbursed as much as you should be (you lose up to 5 euros per medical examination). Please find below the form for “*médecin traitant*”:

http://www.ameli.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/formulaires/S3704.pdf

Fill this document in, have your chosen physician sign it and send it to your local security centre. Note that you can change your *‘médecin traitant’* as many times as you want. Just ask the new one to sign the form each time.

For your wife/husband registration (should this apply), please upload this file:

http://www.ameli.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/formulaires/S3182.pdf

Also note that physicians are allowed to ask for a more expensive fee than the standard one. This should be mentioned on their door plate. NHS reimbursement is in any case based on the standard fee.

b. Mutuelle

As a complement to Social Security, you can subscribe to a complementary health insurance (“*mutuelle*”), which complements up to 100% -depending on the type of expenses- the NHS reimbursement. It is not mandatory but can be worth it for dental or ophthalmology expenses (very) expensive in France, and poorly reimbursed by NHS.

You have a large offer for *mutuelles*, with a wide variety of prices and services.

LMDE and MEP represent affordable and interesting options to students. You will find people from these companies standing at the university entrance in September and October promoting their offer. Alternatively online subscription is possible. See for example

<http://www.lmde.com/etudiants-etrangeurs/foreign-students.html>

<http://www.mep.fr/J-arrive-en-France>

For people with a French contract, the complementary health insurance most commonly used among the lab staff are:

-MGEN: <http://www.mgen.fr/>

Input from French colleagues can be valuable to choose the complementary health insurance which will suit your needs at best.

If you need a translation into French of some document, don’t hesitate to ask for help.

c. Bank & insurances

The rental and civil liability insurance are mandatory (“*assurance locative*” and ‘*responsabilité civile*’ in French). It is provided by your bank or independent firm. Fees are charged for 1 year (about 70euros/year).

Civil liability protects **you** (Responsabilité Civile or RC in French) in case you damage or broke somebody's stuffs. For an example, if you walk on somebody's glasses by mistake, this insurance will reimburse this person for you.

Rental insurance protects **your personal stuffs at home** (Assurance Locative in French) in case there is a fire or a flood and your stuffs are wasted. They reimburse you for your clothes/laptop...

How to stop this insurance -> When you leave France, please send a letter to the bank (send it by post, by special delivery, with receipt of acknowledgement, ask the Post Office for "un recommandé avec accusé de réception"), to cancel your insurance. Join to your letter certificate (from the campus administration or your owner) saying you've left the Social room (this certificate is called "Etat des lieux de sortie"). They'll credit your account with the amount corresponding to the remaining period.

Examples of insurance for student (if not provided by your bank): <http://www.assurances-etudiants.com/en/activity-0-397-398.html>

Formule 2 provides all necessarily protection for a bedroom at the CROUS residence (university residence) for 22.80 euros/year.

2. Administrative paperwork

a. Convention d'Accueil

At least 2 months before your departure, your future host laboratory in France has to request the *Convention d'Accueil* from the *Préfecture* (head office of the French basic administrative unit called *Département*). This official document states that you will indeed be hosted in the laboratory.

Your host lab has to send it to you so that you can apply to a **scientist visa ("D" visa)** at the French Embassy in China.

Please avoid applying to STUDENT visa; it is MANDATORY to have a SCIENTIST visa if you are a PhD in France, even if you'll register as a student in a French university.

b. Visa

If you stay in France less than 3 months, then your D visa ("FRANCE sauf CTOM") covers automatically the duration of your stay in France. Don't do anything.

If you stay in France **more than 3 months**, then you have to send a document at the OFII (French Embassy in China provides you this document). OFII is the French agency for immigration and integration. Then you get an appointment at the OFII in France, who put a special stamp on your visa, which is valid the duration of your stay.

Please check ANNEXE: How to get a visa?

Old procedure was to get a "resident card", but it is over now (new rule since October, 2012).

Info in case you need to provide picture to OFII: note that French administration has got very sharp & strict rules concerning ID pictures. It is strongly advised to take these pictures in France after being informed on these regulations.

Kindly note that thanks to *article 21.2 bis of the Application Convention of the Schengen agreement, modified by the rule 265/2010 of March 25th 2010*, it is allowed to travel inside Schengen countries thanks to your **visa D**, for maximal periods of 3 months per periods of 6 months. Exemple : you have a D visa from February 1st to September 1st, you can stay 3 months during your visa validity in another country from Schengen space.

3. Housing

a. CROUS

CROUS is a public service run in cooperation with Universities. It provides accommodation to students for a very reasonable price, and is open to foreigners, up to availabilities. It can be easy to get a bedroom in some residences, but almost impossible in some others¹. If you don't get a CROUS bedroom, then you have to look for a flat in the private market.

b. Private accommodation

There are 2 ways to find a flat: through an agency (fees are expensive) or through adds. You can find adds in local newspapers or on the following web sites:

<http://www.leboncoin.fr>

<http://www.topannonces.fr>

www.seloger.com

Vocabulary:

Chambre = room in a guest house

T1 = one room flat / T2 = two room flat / T3 =... (Same as F1, F2, F3...)

Part. = individual who rents a flat (as opposed to an agency)

Meublé = furnished

C.C. [Stands for "Charges Comprises"] = charges included (refers to taxes, not water/electricity/ gas charges). Make sure what CC includes: ask the owner.

Honoraires = agency fees

Note that co-location is a popular solution for students to reduce costs of flat renting. In all French universities, there should be an internet forum and/or a communication board where interested students can propose/ask for roommates. Please ask locals for info on that topic. Offers may also be found on these web sites:

www.recherche-colocation.com

www.appartager.com

¹ In Paris universities for example, applications outnumber offers by a large margin.

4. Other basic information

★ Budget

Find below an example of a monthly budget for a student living in a CROUS residence:

Accommodation (uni residence CROUS)	153-350 €
Food	
• Meals (uni restaurant)	165 €
• Supermarkets (breakfast, drinks...)	150 €
Books and stationery	50 €
Local transport	20 €
Personal upkeep	60 €
Leisure	60 €
Phone	50 €
TOTAL	Around 750 €

Private accommodation is more expensive, and can significantly affect your monthly budget. Obviously, your expenses depend on your way of life.

Some additional expenses are to be foreseen on arrival! First month's expenditures will be nearly twice as much as the next months.

Health insurance (for one year)	200 €
Extra health coverage (mutuelle)	If chosen ~ from 20 to 200 euros/month
Tuition fees	Around 300 €
Returnable deposit for your accommodation	1 month rent
Initial expenditures (sheets, towels, cooking utensils, books...)	Depend on your needs
Fees and subscriptions (sports...)	Up to you

★ Taxes

Income tax

This concerns people with a French contract, getting a French salary every month.

Every year (usually before the 31st of May), you will have to declare your income from the previous year. You will be requested to pay the corresponding taxes in September (if you pay it in one go). An alternative is to pay on a monthly basis, or every 3 months. The annual tax amount is around one month salary on the average, depending on your salary, family status, and various other parameters. Here is the website to get all information:

<http://www.impots.gouv.fr/portal/dgi/public/particuliers;jsessionid=K5GD4PNRMLHELQFIEMQSFFWAVARXAIV1?espld=1&pageld=particuliers&sfid=10>

People usually get a pre-filled declaration, that they check and sign. For your first declaration, you have to pick up a form and send it back to the corresponding tax office (the closest to your flat). Look for “*Recettes-Trésorerie*” in the yellow pages, in your neighbourhood.

The form is the 2042 one. It's available online (enter 2042 as “*Numéro d’Imprimé*”):
<http://www.impots.gouv.fr> You'll need your last year pay stub to fill it.

Accommodation tax

If you rent a flat and occupy it on the 1st of January of year X in it, then you'll have to pay (in year X+1) the accommodation (“*taxe d’habitation*”). This is roughly equivalent to 1 month rent. This does not apply to CROUS accommodations.

★ *Public Transportation Service*

If you have a contract with CNRS, you're allowed to benefit from the reimbursement by CNRS of up to 50% of your transport expenses (only if you buy the yearly card).

★ *Health*

Ask your laboratory administration: they should have a list of local physicians, dentists....

Emergency phone numbers

Fire Brigade	15
SAMU (UAS – Medical Emergency)	18
Police	17
SOS Doctors	3624
SOS infarctus	04 91 49 91 91

★ *Nanny, childcare, school*

In France, preschool, elementary, middle and high schools are free of charge. Registration can be done at any time during the year, and a lunch service is possible in the school cafeterias.

Financial help is provided by CAF (*Caisse d’Allocation Familiale*) if you employ a nanny.

★ *Days off*

Here is the list of the bank holidays in France:

Fête du travail - Labour Day	1st of May
Victoire 1945 - Victory Day 1945	8th of May
Fête Nationale - Bastille Day	14th of July
Assomption - Assumption Day	15th of August
Toussaint - All Saints Day	1st of November
Armistice 1918	11th of November

Noël - Christmas Day

25th of December

★ *French lessons*

Take advantage of your stay in France to learn the local language!

With CNRS: registration every year (priority given to CNRS contracts). Local university may also provide some offer to registered students.

★ *Theft*

In case your stuffs are stolen in France or abroad in Europe, the recommendations are:

- Block all credit cards immediately by phone (copy important phone numbers in electronic files available from a remote computer).
- Get to the local police station and ask for a certificate with the list of all things which have been stolen including flight/train tickets. This is essential, to get back "home", to get money back from the insurance and to get new official documents.



Anyway and in any case, please do not hesitate to ask your supervisor for all questions not addressed in this welcome book.

ANNEXE: HOW TO GET A VISA

Step 1 (2 months
before the arrival)

- "Convention d'Accueil" creation by your host laboratory
- Invitation letter's creation (signed by the laboratory Director)

Step 2

- Convention d'Accueil's validation by CNRS DR (Regional Delegation)/Uni
- Prefecture's stamp on the "Convention d'Accueil"

Step 3

- Visitor asks for a "**D FRANCE sauf CTOM**" visa (scientist) at the French Embassy of his country thanks to "Convention d'Accueil" + Invitation letter

Step 4

- Stay < 3 months : visa covers the period
- Stay > 3 months : contact OFII to get the special stamp on the visa

HOW TO GET A VISA?

WHO => host institution (laboratory) provides the "Convention d'Accueil", signed by head of University/CNRS and police station

WHY => to allow the visitor scientist to apply for a visa ("D" visa for scientists)

WHERE => at the French Embassy of his country of origin

CAREFUL => you must start this process 2 months before the scientist arrive in France to avoid red tape

DOCUMENT REQUIRED => (to get French CNRS DR signature) letter of Invitation including dates of arrival/departure, statute of the scientist, experience he will work in, under who's supervision, paid by who... And Insurance (if there is no French contract, certificate provided by CNRS DR).

NB Please kindly note that these information may change, check them with your DR (CNRS)/universities/prefectures...

How to get the special stamp from OFII?

If the foreigner stays more than 3 months, it is necessarily to go to OFII (Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration) to get a special stamp on your visa. You have to send them a document, given by the French Embassy in China when you got your visa.

Then the foreigner will be automatically given an appointment to a medical checkup at "OFII". After this appointment you get the stamp, which allow you officially to stay the duration of your visa.

Example:

You have a visa from 01/11/2012 to 01/11/2013. Once you arrive in France, you send to OFII the document given by French Embassy in China + a copy of your passport. You make the appointment, you have the stamp, and your visa is officially valid until 01/11/2013.

If you don't make the appointment at OFII, your visa is valid 3 months (from 01/11/2012 to 01/02/2013) and then you are outlaw.