



# Paris Information Guide

*Everything you need to know while in Paris!*

# Contents

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Contact Information .....	4
<i>Our address</i> .....	4
<i>How to get there</i> .....	4
<i>Office Hours</i> .....	4
The MICEFA Team .....	5
Communication .....	6
<i>Student Mail and E-mail</i> .....	6
<i>Cell Phones and Carriers</i> .....	6
Transportation .....	7
<i>The Paris Metro system (RATP: Régie Autonome de Transport Parisien)</i> .....	7
<i>Carte Imagine "R"</i> .....	7
<i>Carte Navigo découverte</i> .....	7
<i>Passes</i> .....	7
General Information .....	8
<i>Electrical Appliances</i> .....	8
<i>Budgeting</i> .....	8
<i>Cost of Living in Paris</i> .....	8
<i>Books</i> .....	8
<i>Meals</i> .....	8
<i>Personal Expenses</i> .....	8
<i>Employment</i> .....	8
<i>Entertainment</i> .....	9
<i>Travel</i> .....	9
Housing .....	9
<i>Finding permanent housing with MICEFA</i> .....	9
<i>Types of Housing</i> .....	9
<i>Key Housing Terms</i> .....	9
Final steps for your visa once in France .....	10
<i>For North American Students</i> .....	10
<i>Travelling and your visa*</i> .....	10
<i>Further Information</i> .....	10
<i>Additional Procedures: Renewing your visa</i> .....	11
Cultural Adjustment .....	11
<i>Signs of Culture Shock</i> .....	11
<i>Coping Strategies</i> .....	11
<i>Safety</i> .....	12
When in Paris, do as the Parisians .....	13
<i>Tone of Voice</i> .....	13
<i>Politeness</i> .....	13
<i>Cultural Relativity</i> .....	13
<i>Dating and Sex</i> .....	13
<i>Some useful vocabulary and information</i> .....	13
<i>Pharmacies</i> .....	14
<i>Clinics</i> .....	14

<b>**Remember MICEFA is here to help you with any and all needs.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Academics .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Class Attendance .....</i>	<b>14</b>
<i>Teaching Methods .....</i>	<b>14</b>
<i>Teacher/ Student Rapport.....</i>	<b>14</b>
<i>Useful Academic Information .....</i>	<b>15</b>
<b>Student timeline.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Emergency Contact Info .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Emergencies.....</i>	<b>17</b>
<i>Emergency Contact Numbers .....</i>	<b>18</b>
<i>Medical Emergency Contact.....</i>	<b>19</b>
<i>English Speaking Doctors .....</i>	<b>19</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Information.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>For Traveling .....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>For Clothing, Appliances, etc. ....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>Reasonably Priced Bookstores.....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>Cheap Theater Tickets.....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>Librairies .....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>For Court Approved Translators.....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>Banking Information.....</i>	<b>21</b>
<i>International Student Organizations and Activities .....</i>	<b>22</b>
<b>Get Involved: Volunteer! .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<i>Getting involved in Paris .....</i>	<b>22</b>



# Paris Information Guide

Everything you need to know while in Paris!

## Contact Information

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### Our address

MICEFA  
6 Rue du Douanier Rousseau  
75014 Paris  
France

### How to get there

Métro: (line 4) Alésia  
Tramway: (line 3) Port d'Orléans  
RER: (line B) Denfert-Rochereau

### Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 9:30am - 12:30pm; 1:30pm-5:30pm  
Wednesday: 9:30am - 12:30pm

*NB: Please note that the office may exceptionally close for meetings. Please stay up to date with office closures by checking your emails, MICEFA Facebook, and Twitter.*

**Office Phone:** +33 (0)1 40 51 76 96

**Emergency Cell:** +33 (0)6 51 56 26 60

**E-mail:** [info@micefa.org](mailto:info@micefa.org)

**Website:** [www.micefa.org](http://www.micefa.org)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/micefa/>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/micefa1>

## The MICEFA Team

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<b>General Inquiries</b>	MICEFA	<a href="mailto:info@micefa.org">info@micefa.org</a>

In case of an emergency **during office hours**, please call the MICEFA office.

**Outside office hours**, please call the emergency cell numbers. Leave a message on the voicemail if nobody answers. We will make sure to call you back.

Remember – this number is to be used for emergencies **ONLY**: i.e. severe injuries, illness, or serious emotional disturbance, so use your good judgment and common sense before calling.

Keep the MICEFA phone numbers on you **at all times**. Program them into your cell phone as soon as possible, just in case!

**Students from Miami, SUNY, and CSU-IP, please contact your Resident Directors as well.**



# Communication

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## Student Mail and E-mail

We do communicate most of our important information updates by e-mail. Be sure that we have a current e-mail address on file for you and please be sure to check your e-mail regularly, including your spam box.

There is a student mailbox in the MICEFA office where you can pick up your mail.

If you would like your mail sent to you at the MICEFA, please have them be addressed in the following format:

Your Name (LAST NAME, First Name)  
C/O MICEFA  
6 rue du Douanier Rousseau  
75014 Paris  
FRANCE

If you plan to receive packages, be sure to inform friends or family members to mark your goods as USED or PERSONAL ITEMS to avoid customs fees.

## Cell Phones and Carriers

**The MICEFA requires that you have a cell phone, charged, turned on and with you at all times while enrolled in our program so that you can be reached quickly in the event of an emergency.**

If you plan to use your current cell phone, make sure it is unlocked and able to accept other providers' SIM cards BEFORE leaving your home country. You can purchase your phone plan during your first days in Paris.

There are several cell phone service providers available and 2 types of billing plans:

- The first is a standard "monthly plan". Some require that you to set up a bank account, others simply need a credit card with a chip in it. You will then be billed directly each month. Some companies such as Free and SFR offer plans without a commitment for as low as 2€ a month. You can cancel at anytime. Unlimited monthly plans usually cost around 20€.
- The second option involves buying a pre-paid cell phone and then purchasing pre-paid cards (*carte*

*mobile*) to charge your phone credit as needed. Card values are in the amounts of 5, 10, 25, 35 euros and up.

*Note: In France, you do NOT pay for incoming calls or text messages.*

**06 and 07 numbers are cell phone numbers.**

**01 numbers are home phone/land line numbers in the Paris region, Ile-de-France.**

**09 numbers are internet phone service numbers.**

**02, 03, 04 and 05 numbers are around the country (outside of Paris and its suburbs).**

The main carriers in France are Bouygues, Orange, SFR, Free, and Virgin.

Bouygues: <http://www.bouyguestelecom.fr/>

B&You: <https://www.bouyguestelecom.fr/forfaits-mobiles/sans-engagement>

Orange: <http://www.orange.fr/portail>

SFR: <http://www.sfr.fr/>

Free: <http://www.free.fr/adsl/index.html>

RED : <https://www.red-by-sfr.fr/>

Free is the most popular option for SIM cards amongst students. Unlimited plans cost 19.99€ (without a contract) and 15.99€ if you sign up for internet, cable and landline services:

<https://freemobile.toosurtoo.com/forfaits/tarifs/>

They also have a Free center where you can buy a SIM card with your American bank card. The address: 8 Rue de la Ville-l'Évêque, 75008 Paris

# Transportation

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## The Paris Metro system

(RATP: Régie Autonome de Transport Parisien)

North American students are always impressed with the efficiency and quietness of the Paris Metro system. During rush hours, trains arrive every two-three minutes (unless there is a “*grève*” (strike)). It is very easy to change train lines by making a “*correspondance*”. You may check the RATP website for train times, scheduling information, and itineraries: [www.ratp.fr](http://www.ratp.fr).

The metro service **runs from around 5:30am to around 12:45am during the week** (the last train of every line leaves its point of origin at 12:30am) and 1:40am on weekends. Bus service varies from line to line.

There is a night bus system called the **Noctilien** that runs virtually throughout the city between 12:30am and 5:30am. The *Noctilien* departs every hour on the half hour from Châtelet, and every hour on the hour from the outlying points of Paris. **NEVER** travel alone on the *Noctilien* and always watch your belongings to avoid any complications.

Metro maps - “*Petit Plan du metro de Paris*” - are available in the Metro stations. Every metro station also has a large metro map displayed near the *guichet*, the platform, and a plan du **quartier** (neighborhood map) near the **sortie(s)** (exit(s)). It is all very easy, and you will master the metro in no time at all.

## Carte Imagine “R”

This is a **yearly** pass for students under 26, which allows you unlimited use of the metro, buses, RER and tramways in the entire Ile-de-France area at all time.

It also offers access to special train rates, as well as other benefits including discounted movie tickets. The price starts at 373€/ year, that you can pay at once or monthly.

## Carte Navigo Liberté +

As opposed to a yearly card, this card can be purchased for 2€ and charged up with individual tickets. It is

available in many Metro stations, RATP vendors, and TABACS.

Individual metro tickets cost 2,10€ and can be purchased at any Métro station or via the app on your phone.

## Passes – Navigo Semaine / Mois

The “*pass hebdomadaire*” (weekly pass) is the best if you arrive earlier in August or January. Weekly passes are good for 7 days from Monday to Sunday. The price is 30€ for unlimited anywhere on the RATP network.

The “*pass mensuel*” (monthly pass) allows you to travel for a calendar month on the RATP network. Recharges can be done at the station or directly on the RATP app. The price is 84,10€.

You will always need to **valider** your ticket or Navigo pass when you take any public transportation. This means putting in a ticket or swiping your pass on the reader. Transportation fines are hefty in Paris and can run up to 200€, so be responsible.



# General Information

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## Electrical Appliances

You will need a converter/ transformer to convert French 220V to 110V for your small appliances. Otherwise, leave them at home or bring travel appliances that are designed for both currents. **Adapters and converters** can be purchased throughout Paris at the following stores: FNAC, Boulanger, Darty, BHV.

## Budgeting

Check out the MICEFA Estimated Budget online : <https://micefa.org/north-american-students/paris-exchange-budget/>

Life in Paris is can be expensive. Buying your own food to eat at home or eating in the student restaurants around Paris (CROUS) is MUCH cheaper than eating in a café. If you do go to a café, standing at the counter is cheaper than sitting at a table. Also, in both cafés and bars, drink prices tend to go up after 9pm. Tourist hot spots, such as the Champs-Élysées or the Boulevard Saint-Germain, charge much higher prices than the neighborhood cafés where the local Parisians go to “prendre un verre” (have a drink).

CROUS restaurants around Paris: <http://www.crous-paris.fr/restauration/les-lieux-de-restauration/>

## Cost of Living in Paris

### Exchange rate

December 2023: 1€ = \$1.06 (500€ = \$532)  
\$1= 0,94€

If you need to exchange cash between currencies, exchange bureaus are lockated throughout the city but avoid touristy areas where rates are not great, such as the Champs Elysee or the Louvre.

## OFII Residency Permit

Cost 50€ - Once you have found permanent housing, MICEFA will help you with the OFII process online: Office Français de l’Immigration et de l’intégration. This process is mandatory and must be completed within the first 3 months of your arrival. See page 10 for more details.

## Books

50 - 75€ per semester. Second-hand books (“occasion”) could be a cheaper option.

## Meals

Students can find reduced priced complete meals from the University restaurants around Paris (CROUS): from 3,30€; non-university restaurants are more expensive but you can find offers in all price ranges. Food at the grocery store costs about the same as in Northern America. Plan on about 75€ per week (depending on your eating habits).

Some grocery stores to keep mind (from least expensive to most expensive): LIDL, Casino Franprix, Carrefour, Monoprix.

You may also find good deals at French open-air markets.

French Open-air Markets

<https://www.paris.fr/pages/les-marches-parisiens-2428>

## Personal Expenses

Clothing, postage, miscellaneous articles and entertainment: 150 - 350€ per month.

## Employment

Many students have obtained English teaching/ tutoring jobs.

Under the conditions of your student visa and titre de séjour, you have the legal right to work up to 20 hours per week. You may choose to do “petits boulots” like baby-sitting or tutoring.

### Useful links for jobs:

- Babylangues: <https://www.babylangues.com/>
- Family Sphere: <http://www.family-sphere.com/>
- FUSAC: <http://www.fusac.fr/>
- Jobetudiant: <http://jobetudiant.net>
- L'Etudiant.fr: <http://www.letudiant.fr/jobsstages.html>

You may also find jobs in English-speaking establishments around Paris, such as bookstores, restaurants, and pubs.



## Entertainment

There are many fun activities to do in and around Paris. Get in the habit of asking if there is a “*tarif étudiant*” (student price). Movies cost about 10€, but students and Carte Imagine R holders can purchase tickets for 6€ to 8€. Concerts can be 30€ or more but there are many places with concerts in bars that are cheaper. Drinks in bars can cost anywhere between 5€ and 15€+. Look for Happy Hours or Student Night (often Thursdays). You may also check out your Parisian university’s student center for student discounts.

## Travel

Flights from the US/ Canada depend on your point of departure! A weekend ticket to London on the Eurostar is about 120€, depending on when you reserve. The price for a roundtrip flight to Berlin or Rome would run about 240€. Depending on how well in advance you book a flight with low cost companies, such as Ryanair ([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)) or Easyjet ([www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)), flights can be as low as 50€ each way. You can also compare flights on [Kayak](http://www.kayak.com).

Trains around France vary. Check the SNCF website for further pricing information: <https://www.sncf-connect.com/>. Certain discounts are available to students through this website.

When you travel, please inform the MICEFA office via e-mail about **your dates of departure, your accommodation, and a phone number so we can reach you in case of emergency.**

## Housing

### Finding permanent housing with MICEFA

Multiple options for housing exist with MICEFA: Host families, demi au pair, student residences, and a large listing of landlords all proposing a wide variety of offers (studio, apartments, maid’s room all over Paris).

Some options are available if you want to have your housing arranged before arrival (host families, demi au pair, and sometimes student residence). Bear in mind that spots may be limited.

If you have not done so already, you will be able to

choose your housing with the help of our Program Assistant onsite and use the listings at the MICEFA office. The housing search is not as complicated as it may seem from abroad – it is really a way of exploring and getting to know Paris. The city has many different neighborhoods, options and prices. Given the excellent transportation system, it doesn’t take more than half an hour to get to most places in Paris.

**Please MICEFA does NOT recommend you rent an apartment sight unseen.**

If you have any question regarding this, please send an email to [info@micefa.org](mailto:info@micefa.org)

### Types of Housing

- Student Residence (CROUS): Individual dorm-style rooms. To be arranged with MICEFA depending on availability: **530-780€**
- Maid’s / Student’s rooms (*Chambre de bonne*): usually located on the top floor: sometimes without an elevator: **530 - 890€**
- Studios: **680€ minimum**
- Flat Shares: 2 rooms, meaning two bedrooms: **680€ and up per student.**
- Renting a room in the home of a family: **530-950€.**
- Demi au-pair jobs: Free room in exchange for 12-15 hours of tutoring/ babysitting per week.

In addition, you **MUST** buy renter’s insurance for any type of lodging. Ask your landlord or the MICEFA Assistant for more information. This may range from 30€ to 120€ for the year.

Also, ask your landlord about who is going to pay your electricity/utilities. You may need to open an account with Electricité de France (EDF) or another provider. It will cost around 50 euros a month, depending on the size of your apartment.

### Key Housing Terms

- **Studio, F1** = one room studio apartment
- **F2, F3, etc.** = one room, two room apartments, etc.
- **Sans ascenseur** = no elevator, walk-up (extremely common in Paris)
- **Salle d’eau** = shower (not bath or bathtub) room
- **WC** = toilet
- **Sur palier** = on the floor landing, outside the room itself, in a shared area

- **Bail** = lease (please make sure to read this VERY carefully)
- **Caution** = security deposit, usually two-three months' rent, with or without charges reimbursed at the end of your stay once the security check has been done. **YOU MUST MAKE SURE TO GET A RECEIPT FOR YOUR DEPOSIT. If you fail to do so, you are putting yourself at RISK!**
- **Etat des lieux** = a document describing the condition of the apartment and its contents upon arrival. Always ask for an "état de lieux," especially for furnished apartments, to avoid having money deducted for damages or replacements from your security deposit. This is a precaution both for you and your landlord.
- **Loyer** = monthly rent, due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.
- **Quittance de loyer** = receipt for your monthly rent payment
- **EDF/ GDF / Engie** = Electricité de France/ Gaz de France (electric/ gas companies). Also ask your landlord about who is going to pay your electricity consumption? You may need to open an account with Electricité de France (or another provider) directly (around 50€ / month)
- **Impôts locatifs/ taxe d'habitation** = taxes paid on an annual basis for apartment rentals. Your landlord or the person subletting usually assumes these charges or may ask you to pay your share for the months that you rent the apartment. In some cases, you may receive a bill for these taxes addressed directly to you, to be paid in December or January. Make sure you know if you are responsible for this charge.
- **Gardien/ Concierge** = the French version of a building superintendent. This personer may be able to receive packages and deliver the mail.
- **Assurance habitation** = renter's insurance is **the responsibility of the renter** (not the landlord) in France. You are required by law to purchase renter's insurance for your apartment or studio. There are generally special student rates. An inexpensive option is Matmut, which offers a student rate of 60-80€ per year (<http://www.matmut.fr/assurance/etudiants-assurance-habitation.asp>).
- **Propriétaire** = landlord

## Final steps for your visa once in France

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France has outsourced their visa service to VFS Global for American Students. Students must first register with [Campus France](#) and then can apply for their in-person visa appointment through [France-Visas.gouv.fr](#).

Canadian students will file for their visa appointment through the Canadian consulate or embassy closest to your home region after applying through Campus France.

### For North American Students

Once you've secured your permanent housing, the MICEFA staff will assist you in completing your OFII process. Everything is online now and the process is a simple registration and fee.

### Travelling and your visa\*

**Schengen area:** You can travel in the Schengen area without restrictions and outside of the Schengen area by showing your passport and visa. Please note that Great Britain and Ireland are NOT part of the Schengen area. Make sure that you carry your OFII documentation and passport no matter where you go.

\*May be affected by COVID

### Further Information

The **Schengen Area** is a group of 26 European countries that have relaxed passport and immigration controls at their common borders:

Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. Please find a map at the following link: <http://www.axa-schengen.com/fr/pays-schengen>

**Great Britain and Ireland are NOT part of the Schengen Area. COVID requirements may change current boarder controls.**

## Additional Procedures: Renewing your visa

If you wish to renew your visa, you must proceed as follows:

- First, you must receive approval from your home campus agreeing to your extension.
- After obtaining these documents, the MICEFA administrative assistant will help you fill out your visa application. Once these steps are completed (letter of motivation + certificat de scolarité + application), the MICEFA administrative assistant will be able to send your file to the *Préfecture de Paris*.
- This request must be submitted to the MICEFA at least two months before your current visa expires, if requests are not made within the time constraints provided above, students wishing to renew must apply for a new visa in their country of origin. **NO EXCUSES or EXTENSIONS WILL BE MADE!** Please note that this process takes time, therefore your patience is necessary.

**Please note that there is no grace period in France - when your visa is over you have to leave France. Otherwise you will be illegally on French soil and in case your ID is requested, you could be transferred to a detention center.**

## Cultural Adjustment



### Signs of Culture Shock

If you don't experience some degree of "culture shock" during your first weeks in France, you're either not getting out enough or you're just not paying attention!

Under what may at first appear to be a recognizable social structure lies enormous differences in personal and social rules of behavior, family structure,

student/teacher relationships, norms of friendship, political attitudes, sexual relations, approaches to cleanliness, time, space, diet, health, moral codes, many of which you will notice immediately and be able to adapt to fairly easily.

At a less conscious level, you may come to feel threatened, frustrated, angry and destabilized by subtle conflicts that occur, especially since you may be unable to express yourself fully or be fully understood by people you need to deal with.

In the first few weeks especially, the combination of culture shock and the readjustment of your body clock to changing time zones may lead you to feel that coming to France was a big mistake. Don't believe what your emotions and body rhythms are telling you, but don't ignore them either. Once you recognize the source of your feelings, you will be able to put them into perspective.

Two books that we recommend are *Au Contraire: Figuring Out the French* by Gilles Asselin and Ruth Mastron and *Cultural Misunderstandings: the French-American Experience* by Raymonde Carroll. They could really help you in understanding this phenomenon.

### Coping Strategies

Observe cultural differences, but do not judge them. Remember, none of what is going on around you is directed towards you personally; even the cultural stereotypes which many of the French apply to Americans or others have nothing to do with who you are.

Keep an open mind and a sense of humor. Since you're going to laugh about most of these confrontations one day, why not start out by refusing to take them seriously now.

You might want to record your experiences in a diary; it will help you get a grip on them, learn from them, and will be a wonderful reminder – years from now – of your stay in France!

Get out and meet people by doing things you like to do or have always wanted to do but couldn't. Look for ways to pursue your interests, hobbies, or favorite sports. Go to public places, cafés, clubs, concerts, etc.

Get plenty of rest and try to avoid excessive alcohol consumption. Especially in the first few weeks, over-tiredness, with or without the dehydrating effects of alcohol, can compromise your normally resistant immune system and mimic the symptoms of depression.

***Above all, DO NOT REMAIN ISOLATED: TALK to people in the group, or to others at the MICEFA office.***

## **Safety**

The more you know about your new environment, the better you will be able to 'neutralize' but not necessarily eliminate, safety risks. You should not allow a sense of delight in your new surroundings to BLIND you to the risks and the need for **COMMON SENSE**.

First of all, you should be aware that **THEFT**, especially petty theft, is rampant throughout France and that tourists and foreign students are prime targets. Be careful with your handbags and wallets: pick pocketing has been a high art in Europe since Roman times and its practitioners are often talented and swift. Favorite hangouts for pickpockets are crowds, buses, subways, train stations, stores and ATMs (*distributeurs de billets*). If you have a problem at an ATM, do not accept help from strangers or new acquaintances. It would be best to walk away and come back when there is no one around. (Also, it is always best to use your ATM card outside a bank during office hours only; if the machine should swallow your card, you can always go inside to inquire about how to retrieve it).

Do not give your address to strangers or new acquaintances or allow people to read over your shoulder in the bank or post office. If you feel you must give someone your address, you may use the MICEFA office address.

Violent crimes, such as rape and muggings are no more prevalent in France than elsewhere (the murder rate is 5 times lower than in the U.S.), but you should not let statistics lull you into letting your guard down. Women in particular are advised to avoid public parks and

certain Paris suburbs after dark; walk in groups at night; do not do your laundry alone late at night; and do not walk home alone at night. In order to avoid complicated situations, do not let strangers into your house.

Pedestrians do not have the right of way in France! Be very careful, even when you have the green light or are standing on the curb. By North American standards, many French drivers are aggressive and undisciplined. Do not expect them to be on the lookout for pedestrians. Please don't imitate Parisians when crossing the road.

When traveling between cities, you should take a train or a bus rather than planning on driving or riding a motorbike. Be suspicious of invitations from new acquaintances to drive you to out-of-town destinations and **do not hitch-hike!** Before making travel plans, please check in with the MICEFA concerning travel advisories put out by the U.S./Canadian government.

The electrical current that comes out of the outlets in your dorm room or apartment is 220 volts, twice as strong as in the U.S./ Canada. An electrical shock at that voltage can be lethal. Do not touch any electrical cord, plug or appliance that looks damaged; call your landlord or other responsible party.

Politics is a French passion. You may find yourself in some very heated political debates in which you cannot hope to change anyone's strongly held opinions. It is best not to criticize too strongly the government of a country where you are a guest, nor to vaunt your own country's moral or economic superiority. At the same time, remember, you are not responsible for every act of your government nor do you have to defend everything about your own country. **Most important, do not get involved in political protests or demonstrations. Should a demonstration lead to violence you could get injured or arrested, in which case your visa may be revoked.**

# When in Paris, do as the Parisians

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## Tone of Voice

There are a few things that the French say that make Americans stand out, and the first thing they often say, is that we are loud. In France, a conversation you are having in a public place, especially on the metro, should be at a level at which you are not subjecting the people around you to have to listen to you. If you are doing it correctly, the person you are talking to will be close to you and has to listen attentively to hear you.

## Politeness

*Politesse* is extremely important to the French. To ensure a positive interaction, begin a conversation with a stranger with *Bonjour Madame/Monsieur*. When asking for help, if you can remember the phrase, "*Excusez-moi de vous déranger*", it will go a long way.

## Cultural Relativity

Practice cultural relativity. We interpret the actions of others by our own "rules", which are made up of all the ways of being we are taught, and that we assimilate by being raised in our culture. The French have a different culture, and so it is no use to judge them using our rules. Observe and compare, but do not judge. Being upset at the French for being French will do you no good. If you do not enjoy the cultural differences, this is an excellent opportunity for you to discover what your own programming is: what is important to you, and what do you take for granted at home?

## Dating and Sex

Dating codes and sexual signals here may take some getting used to. A woman who smiles at strangers in the street may be thought to be inadvertently flirting or inviting an advance. Men can sometimes be quite persistent as well, not heading subtle cues. Don't be afraid to tell someone outright if you would like to be left alone.

Venereal diseases, including AIDS and HIV, are as common here as in the U.S./Canada and, in large cities and university towns, foreign students of both sexes may be perceived as easy prey for sexual tourism in reverse. It is advisable to use informed discretion in choosing partners and to ALWAYS use condoms

(*préservatifs*), familiarly and fondly known as "*capotes*". They are widely available in drugstores (*pharmacies*) and at the *distributeurs automatiques* in the streets, even in metro stations.

## Some useful vocabulary and information

### **Emergency Contraception - The "Morning-After Pill"**

In the event of contraceptive failure, an emergency contraceptive pill (*la contraception d'urgence*), is available. This emergency contraception is available at pharmacies: without a prescription (unreimbursed by social security) as well as with a prescription (reimbursed by social security). The unreimbursed cost is €4-10. It is free for minors.

### **Termination of Pregnancy**

Termination of pregnancy (*IVG*) is legal in France up to 12-weeks after conception. There is a one-week period of compulsory "reflection" prior to termination, except in an urgent case where this can be reduced to two days.

Single women do not need to provide the agreement of the partner. A non-resident visitor to France may legally have a pregnancy terminated while in France.

A woman may begin by visiting the doctor of her choice, a public hospital or a private clinic practising abortion (you can find this information at the Planning Family Clinic). After this initial consultation, certain laboratory tests may be required.

For those registered with the French social security system, 100% of the cost is covered by the system. For the non-residents in France, it may be possible to receive reduced rate medical assistance (though not all hospitals or clinics will do so). Some clinics and hospitals will ask the patient to sign a non-binding certificate stating they intend to remain in France, others will request that they show they are or will live in France for at least 2 months.

- abortion = l'avortement
- condom = préservatif
- morning after pill = la pilule du lendemain
- birth control = la pilule contraceptive
- sexually transmitted disease (STD) = Infection sexuellement transmissible (IST)

## Pharmacies

Most Paris neighborhoods have numerous pharmacies easily recognized by flashing green crosses.

Most pharmacists speak English and can provide you with over-the-counter medications (e.g. pain relievers or cough syrup).

You'll need to head to a pharmacy for most over-the-counter medications. Antibiotics must be prescribed by a doctor. Some medications are easily obtained in the US; however, this may differ in France (eg. Allergy medication).

Most pharmacies are open during normal business hours (Mon-Sat).

If your local pharmacy is closed, look for the name and address of the "Pharmacie de Garde" posted on the pharmacy door. A Pharmacie de Garde is the the closest late-night pharmacy. Otherwise, you can call the nearest police station that will be able to provide you with this information.

### **Pharmacies closing late in Paris:**

- **Publicis Drugstore** (from 8:00AM to 2:00AM)  
133 avenue des Champs-Élysées, 8e  
Tél: 33(0)1 44 43 79 00  
Métro: Charles de Gaulle-Etoile, Georges V
- **Pharmacie des Champs** (24 hour pharmacy)  
84 avenue des Champs-Élysées (passage des Champs), 8e  
Tél: 33(0)1 45 62 02 41  
Métro: Charles de Gaulle-Etoile

## Clinics

Centre de Planification et d'Éducation Familiale  
(Hôpital Cochin-Port Royal)  
Consultation gynécologie  
123 Boulevard de Port-Royal, 75014  
RER (B): Port Royal  
Tel.: 01 58 41 39 39 ou 01 58 41 38 66

For further planning familial and other clinics in Paris, please visit the following links:

<https://www.planning-familial.org/fr/le-planning-familial-de-paris-75>

<https://www.paris.fr/pages/centres-de-depistage-76>

**\*\*Remember MICEFA is here to help you with any and all needs.**

## Academics

### Class Attendance

The MICEFA requires regular class attendance. An important factor in calculating your final grade will be your *assiduité* (attendance). For each class, there are **no (=0) non-excused absences each semester. All non-excused absences might result in the student receiving an F.** If you are sick, bring a medical certificate to your instructor and keep a copy for yourself in case of misplacement (papers of this sort tend to “disappear” in the French administrative system).

### Teaching Methods

You will soon notice that the approach to teaching at French universities is different from what you are accustomed to in North America. It originates in long-standing traditions in the French educational system that stress theory and analysis over practical, hands-on knowledge. This change in emphasis may be disorienting at first and may require you to re-think some of your learning strategies. As you do this, you will gain insight into how the educational background of the French often leads them to think and react in ways that are different from what you might otherwise expect. In addition to learning or perfecting another language, this practical experience in cultural adjustment may be the most valuable lesson you learn from your time abroad.

### Teacher/ Student Rapport

You may find the rapport between you and your instructor to be distant. French professors, even in the *lycée* (high school), have worked many long years to achieve the academic degrees and status they enjoy and have earned their positions through a series of extremely competitive examinations and *concours*. Thus, they are strongly committed to creating a challenging, and rigorous learning environment. Although they take full responsibility for delivering the

content of their course, they do not feel that it is up to them to entertain and motivate their students or to reward them for anything but the very best work.

You are expected to be present, to listen, to absorb, to study, to produce work, and to take tests, but not necessarily to be rewarded profusely for your efforts.

You, on the other hand, are expected to treat your instructors with formal respect. You will address them, and they will address you, as ‘vous.’ You should use the *Monsieur* and *Madame* (followed by their last name) each time you address them. You must arrive to class on time (and apologize for any tardiness), and you may not eat or drink in class. Also make sure to dress appropriately for class. Dress can be casual, but it should be appropriate (no “beach wear” or pyjamas for example).

You should not expect to have as much interaction (except perhaps in conversation classes) as you do with your professors at home, and instructors do not often stay after class to answer questions, unless he/she has specifically indicated his/her willingness to do so. (French professors do not have campus offices, so they have very limited office hours.)

**In conclusion, French education is demanding, but it is also rewarding. Take advantage of it during your time abroad in Paris!**

### Useful Academic Information

**Levels:**

<u>France</u>	<u>North America</u>
License	
L1	Freshman/Sophomore
L2	Sophomore/junior
L3	Junior/Senior
Master	
M1	Senior/Graduate
M2	Graduate

**Credits:**

**ECTS\*** - European Credit Transfer System

\*This system does not transfer for North American students. MICEFA reports credits based on contact hours.

<i>Number of Contact Hours per semester</i>	<i>North American Credits</i>
Under 18 hours	1 credit
18 hours	1.5 credits
24 hours	2 credits
36 hours	3 credits
48 hours	4 credits

**Grades:**

Grades in France are usually on a scale from 0 of 20. Here, the lowest grade acceptable for you to obtain a degree or pass a course is 10 out of 20.

The following table lists the MICEFA *recommended* grading equivalency between the French and American systems for MICEFA courses and French as a Foreign Language (FLE) courses in Paris. This table is adapted from standards determined by the Franco-American Commission for Educational Exchange.

Confirm with the MICEFA office or with your resident director if the following equivalence applies to your case.

A+	16 and up
A	15
A-	14
B+	13
B	12
B-	11
C+	10
C	9
C-	8
D+	7
D	6
D-	5
F	below 5

Mainstream courses with regular French students may be converted more leniently, with +1 inflation. That is, a grade of 15 and up would then be equivalent to an A+, and so on.

**French Academic Vocabulary:**

- **CM** = cours magistraux (lectures)
- **TD** = travaux dirigés (discussion group)
- **TP** = travaux pratiques (lab or practice group)
- **Assiduité** = attendance

- **ABS** = absence injustifiée (unexcused absences)
- **Contrôle continu** = a set of graded assignments added to your final exam, attendance is included
- **Contrôle terminal** = Final exam
- **Cours particuliers** = Tutoring
- **Défaillant(e)** = Fail
- **Désistement** = Withdrawal
- **Devoir** = homework
- **Devoir sur table** = In-class written exam
- **Dissertation** = essay
- **Dossier** = project / file of work
- **Examens** = exams/ finals
- **Partiel** = Mid-term exam
- **Rattrapage** = Make-up exam period
- **Thèse** = Thesis
- **Tutorat** = Tutorial/ tutoring

NB: If you have a problem regarding your course logistics (aka room number or campus) please report this to the MICEFA office asap and we will assist you. Please note that each professor structures their course differently, so keep an open mind.

## Student timeline

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**August** (Year/Fall students)

**January** (Spring Students)

Arrival: settle into Paris by choosing housing, opening a bank account and attending your MICEFA Intensive French Language Program and visiting your Parisian university host campus. You'll find your bearings in Paris soon enough!

**September/October** (Year/Fall students)

**January / February** (Spring students)

### Course Registration Form:

**MANDATORY:** You will have to fill out your Course Registration Form – usually by the second week of class – and **turn it in to the MICEFA office when requested.** The Course Registration Form will need to include ALL courses from both MICEFA and your French university. This document is VERY IMPORTANT. It enables us to process and create your transcript and to **TRACK DOWN YOUR GRADES** when you are back in North America. You must indicate all requested information, name of professors, title and code of

courses, level, and the number of hours of class per week. Please understand that we won't be able to find the grade you got from that "*tall blond professor with a cute accent*" (yes, it has happened...). You will soon understand that the French university administration is not always very efficient and that's why every paper we ask from you to fill out is VERY precious to us. Thanks in advance!

*Please remember that ECTS, meaning European Credits, has nothing to do with North American credits!*

### Add/Drop Form:

**MANDATORY:** You will need to submit your Add/ Drop Form completely and concisely no later than **your FOURTH WEEK of class at the French university.** Since the French university does not have an official add/drop period, you will need to let your professor know that you would either like to add/drop the course verbally or via e-mail. If you do not submit your MICEFA Add/Drop Form by the deadline indicated above your transcript will include all the courses submitted on the Course Registration Form.

**\*You can download above forms from our website:**

<http://micefa.org/north-american-students/downloads-documents/>

**December/January** (Fall students)

**May/June** (Year/Spring students)

Departure: If you need to leave early to begin your home university's semester, obtain a summer job, attend summer school, etc., you may need to negotiate your early departure with your professor. Please understand that some professors may refuse such a short attendance in their class and may not allow you to take the final exam in advance. We prefer that you stay until the end of the semester whenever possible.

### Evaluation Forms:

You should give an evaluation form to each of your professors (except your MICEFA professors since we will have direct contact with them for your grades), together with a pre-addressed pre-stamped envelope addressed to the MICEFA. You may also download the evaluation form and submit it electronically to your professor. Your professor may then submit your evaluation form via e-mail to [info@micefa.org](mailto:info@micefa.org).



This will speed up the procedure and will help you get your grades and your transcript faster. These evaluations will come to MICEFA directly and we will then be able to process and create your transcript. This form can also be downloaded from our website: <http://micefa.org/north-american-students/downloads-documents/>

### Before returning home

#### Cancelling contracts:

Please schedule an appointment with the bank branch to close your account. This closure procedure is very important. You will also need to cancel all service contracts (phone, internet, ect.) that you signed up for while living in France. Please note that one month's notice is usually required to cancel any kind of contract in France. Cancelling contracts in France is usually conducted in writing, therefore a cancellation letter is needed. You will need to send this letter to the cancellation services (*services de résiliation*) with a proof of mailing (*avis de réception*) from the post office. The avis de réception will serve as proof that you sent in your cancellation properly to the carrier. You can find a model letter on the MICEFA Student Workspace. If further assistance is required, please address the MICEFA office.

#### Housing:

Before moving out, you will need to notify your landlord of your departure with one month's notice. Make sure to confirm that this is understood clearly and concisely with your landlord to avoid any confusion. Communication is key! Once again, a departure letter may be required. In order to ensure that you receive your full deposit back, make sure to read the fine lines of your contract and to leave your place clean without any damaged property.

## Emergency Contact Info

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### Emergencies

You will be given a list of all necessary emergency numbers. **Keep this list in your cell phone contacts so that it is accessible at all times.** In case of a serious emergency such as an accident or imminent danger of physical harm, a life-threatening medical condition or psychological crisis, immediately call one of the police or hospital numbers that you have been given, as well as the MICEFA office or emergency cell. **If you leave Paris overnight, make sure to e-mail the MICEFA staff and let us know where you will be and how we can contact you in case of an emergency.**

### Transcripts:

It is very important to provide the MICEFA with your Course Registration Form and give your professors the Evaluation Forms. These documents are at your disposal under the Downloads and Documents section on our website. If these documents are not submitted on time, it may cause a delay in processing your transcripts upon your return home.

### General Information:

Don't forget to confirm with the MICEFA office to see if everything is in order and to obtain your "*certificat de fin d'études*", which will be important to cancel contracts and to close your bank account. Before leaving Paris, make sure to fill out our Exit Survey, so we may receive your feedback for your stay in Paris and to better serve our future exchange students. We will also be happy to wish you a farewell and to inquire about your experience with us in Paris.

### How do I get my transcript?

An official transcript will be made by MICEFA and sent directly to your study abroad office at your home campus. We need your help, please follow these procedures in order to get a transcript at the end of your stay.

### How to Request a Transcript at a later date

- Email [info@micefa.org](mailto:info@micefa.org)
- Tell us how many official copies, the address of where they should be sent (include attention of, etc.) and if you need them sent on a rush basis
- The first official copy costs €10 and additional copies are €2 each
- You will be sent a paypal invoice for payment and once your payment is received, we will send the transcripts

## Emergency Contact Numbers

<b>European Emergency Number</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>La Police</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Les Pompiers</b> (firemen, more efficient than the police)	<b>18</b>
<b>Le SAMU</b> (ambulance service for emergency transportation to the hospital)	<b>15</b>
<b>SOS Médecins</b> (24-hour service for a doctor to come to your home)	<b>01 47 07 77 77</b>
<b>Centre Anti-Poison</b>	<b>01 40 05 48 48</b>
<b>SOS Help</b> (Depression, suicide)	<b>01 45 39 40 00</b>
<b>Association des Alcooliques Anonymes (AAA)</b>	<b>01 48 06 43 68</b>
<a href="https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/paris/healthcare/support-groups/aa-meetings">https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/paris/healthcare/support-groups/aa-meetings</a>	

### Centres de dépistage VIH/STD

<https://www.paris.fr/pages/centres-de-depistage-76>

or

**CeGIDD: Centers where you can get tested as anonymous, for free and without appointments**

<b>The Counseling Center at the American Cathedral</b>	<b>01 53 23 84 00</b>
<b>LGBT Paris:</b> <a href="http://www.centrelgbtparis.org">http://www.centrelgbtparis.org</a>	<b>01 43 57 21 47</b>
<b>SOS Homophobie</b> (Mon-Fri 6pm-10pm and Sat 2pm-4pm):	<b>01 48 06 42 41</b>
<b>Femmes Info Service</b> (battered Women):	<b>01 40 33 80 60/ 3919</b>
<b>Rape crisis hotline</b> (Mon-Fri 10am-7pm):	<b>0 800 05 95 95</b>
<b>Family Planning Clinics:</b>	
<a href="https://www.planning-familial.org/fr">https://www.planning-familial.org/fr</a>	
<b>Drug Info Service:</b>	<b>0 800 23 13 13</b>
<b>Narcotics Anonymous:</b>	<b>01 43 72 12 72</b>
<b>AIDS/HIV Info Service:</b>	<b>0 800 840 800</b>
<b>Objets trouvés</b> (Préfecture de Police – Lost and Found)	<b>01 53 71 53 71</b>
<b>Carte Bleue volée ou perdue</b> (24h/24h)	<b>0 892 705 705</b>
<b>*Emergency MICEFA Cell</b>	<b>06 51 56 26 60</b>

(\*Call this number ONLY in an emergency; otherwise call the MICEFA office during business hours.)

## Medical Emergency Contact

<b>The American Hospital</b> Has special agreements with some American insurance providers.	<b>55, Blvd du Château</b> Neuilly-sur-Seine Métro: Pont-de-Neuilly or Pont de Levallois Bécon Bus: 83/92	<b>01 46 41 25 25</b> (Ask for Dr. Michael J. Specter or Dr. John Relland.)
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## English Speaking Doctors

### General Practitioners:

Dr. Anne-Valerie Meyers	10, rue Royale (Stairway C, 4th Floor) 75008	01 42 66 47 82
Dr. Nancy Salzman	1, avenue Lowendal, 75007	01 45 63 18 43
Dr. Jurgen Tredup	27, rue Saint-Ambroise, 75011	01 43 55 03 21
Dr. Agnès Bryn	11, rue de Pot de Fer, 75005	01 49 83 94 70 01 55 43 30 80
Dr. Olivier Wong	27, rue Blomet, 75015	01 45 31 81 32
Dr. Jean-Pierre Aubert (takes appointments on Saturdays)	133, rue Ordener, 75018 Métro: Jules Joffrin (Ligne 12)	01 42 58 07 28

### Gynecologists:

Dr. Guy Bercau	6, place Saint-Michel, 75006	01 47 53 81 64
Dr. Emmanuel David-Montefiore	60, avenue d'Iéna, 75016	01 47 20 50 68
Dr. Christiane Lorphelin	45, avenue Victor Hugo, 75116	01 45 00 40 30
Dr. Patricial Rérolle	3, Sente de la Corne, 78120	01 30 46 02 26

### Dentists:

Dr. Jona Andersen	25, rue de Lubeck 75116	01 47 23 01 00
Dr. Patrick Bauer	71, avenue Franklin D. Roosevelt, 75008	01 42 25 76 30
Dr. Ariane Brunet	75, rue de Turenne, 75003	01 48 87 62 56
Dr. Eric Edwards	88, avenue Foch, 75116	01 45 01 91 71
Dr. Davarpanah (dental surgeon)	36 rue de Lubeck, 75116	01 53 70 36 36

### Physical Therapist:

Mr. Paul Beurskens	26, Boulevard Raspail 75007	01 44 07 04 97
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### Radiologist:

Dr. Antoine Hakime	55, Boulevard du Château 92000 Neuilly-sur-Seine	06 32 84 14 31
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**Therapists:**

Mme. Monica Frankel-d'Alençon	4, rue Plélo, 75015 Paris	06 09 24 60 66 <a href="mailto:monicadalancon@aol.com">monicadalancon@aol.com</a>
Dr. Rosemarie Bourgault	33, rue du Dr Heulin, 75017	01 47 20 40 11 06 13 50 82 60 <a href="mailto:rosemarie.bourgault@wanadoo.fr">rosemarie.bourgault@wanadoo.fr</a>
Cindy Davis	75011	06.49.33.92.30 <a href="mailto:cindavis@gmail.com">cindavis@gmail.com</a>
Justine Duplessis-Nelson (specialized in eating disorders)	11, rue Bosio, 75016	06 17 92 62 50 <a href="mailto:J.duplessisnelson@gmail.com">J.duplessisnelson@gmail.com</a>
Emmanuelle Gira	31 bis, rue Victor Massé 75009 Paris	06.63.78.84.30
SOS Help: English-Language Listening Line in France	<a href="https://soshelpline.org/">https://soshelpline.org/</a>	01 46 21 46 46
International Counseling Service	10, rue Bosio, 75016 <a href="http://www.icsparis.com">http://www.icsparis.com</a>	01 45 50 26 49
Sharon Korman	91 rue du Théâtre, 75015	06 50 02 30 66

**Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists:**

Dr. Daniel F. Brasnu	25, rue Manin, 75019	01 48 03 65 65
Dr. Gerald Fain	32, avenue Matignon, 75008	01 42 27 27 76
Dr. Jacques Huart	13, Av Jean Moulin 75014	01 45 42 14 31

**Chiropractors:**

Ms. Nadine Steinik Foresman	22, rue des Canettes, 75006	06 03 84 88 72
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**Nutritionists:**

Dr. Hervé Grosgeat	108, rue de Bac, 75007	01 30 15 89 20
Dr. Catherine Serfaty-Lacroisniere	8, rue Jean Richepin, 75116	01 45 04 34 34

For further specialty areas please refer to the following link under "Doctors and Hospitals":

<https://fr.usembassy.gov>

## Miscellaneous Information

### For Traveling

- **SNCF** (Gare du Nord, Gare de l'Est, Gare St-Lazare, Gare Montparnasse, Gare de Lyon, Gare d'Austerlitz) <https://www.sncf.com/fr>
- **Club Alliance Voyage**, 33 Rue de Fleurus, 75006  
Métro: Saint-Placide **01 45 48 89 53**

### Lowcost Airlines:

- **Easyjet**: [www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)
- **Ryanair**: <http://www.ryanair.com>
- **Lastminute**: <http://www.lastminute.com>
- **Opodo**: <http://www.opodo.com/>
- **Transavia**: <http://www.transavia.com/fr-FR/accueil/>

### For Clothing, Appliances, etc.

- **Darty**, (appliances), multiple locations
- **Boulangier** (appliances), multiple locations
- **Leroy Merlin** (hardware store), multiple locations
- **Go Sport**, (sporting goods), Forum des Halles, Metro/RER: Châtelet-Les Halles
- **Decathlon**, (sporting goods), multiple locations
- **Celio, H&M, Zara....** (clothing), many locations
- **Le Printemps** and **Les Galeries Lafayette**, (department stores), Boulevard Haussman, Metro/RER: Chaussée d'Antin La Fayette or Havre-Caumartin
- **BHV**, (Upscale department store, hardware in basement), 52 rue de Rivoli 75004, Métro: Hôtel de Ville

### English Bookstores

- **Shakespeare & Co**, 37, rue Bucherie, 75005 (in front of Notre-Dame) RER: St-Michel-Sorbonne
- **Brentano's**, 37 av. de l'Opéra, 75002, Métro: Opéra
- **Smith & Son Paris**, 248, rue de Rivoli, 75001, Métro: Concorde
- **The Abbey Bookshop**, 29, rue Parcheminerie, 75005, Métro: St Michel

### Reasonably Priced Bookstores

- **FNAC** (books, music, stereos, cameras...), Forum des Halles, Métro/RER: Les Halles

- **Gibert Joseph**, (new and used books) Boulevard Saint-Michel 75006, Métro: Saint-Michel

### Cheap Theater Tickets

- **CROUS** also has cheap deals. <http://www.culture-crous.paris/>
- **Kiosque jeunes Canopée 10**, passage de la Canopée 75001

### Librairies

- **La Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) 01 53 79 59 59** 11, quai Muriac, 75013, Métro: Bibliothèque F. Mitterand,
- **La Contemporaine**, Université de Nanterre, RER: Nanterre Université, **01 47 21 40 22**
- **Bibliothèque Saint-Geneviève**, 10, place du Panthéon, 75005, **01 44 41 97 97**
- **Institut du Monde Arabe**, 1, rue Fossés St-Bernard 75005, Métro: Jussieu **01 40 51 38 38**
- **American Library in Paris**, 10, rue du Gal Camou, 75017 **01 53 59 12 60**
- **Bibliothèque Centre Pompidou**, place Georges-Pompidou, open from 12 pm to 10 pm.

*NB: for local library locations in Paris please visit: <https://www.paris.fr/pages/bibliotheques-infos-pratiques-2507>*

### For Court Approved Translators

Christelle Nely  
06 62 35 68 19  
[christellenely@yahoo.fr](mailto:christellenely@yahoo.fr)

For a complete list of translators, please visit:

<https://fr.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/50/2017/02/Translators-court-dappel-February-2017.pdf>

Students with birth certificates originating from outside the U.S. must call the embassy of the country they are from to get info about translators.

### Banking Information

Opening a bank account is only necessary if you plan to work in France. MICEFA can assist you with this upon arrival, but the easiest options are often online banks such as Revolut.

You should contact your home bank prior to departure to be informed of international fees that may apply to your current bank card.

## International Student Organizations and Activities

MICEFA encourages its students to take advantage of the opportunities for cross-cultural exchange presented by being a study abroad student. The following organizations offer opportunities to travel throughout France and Europe as well as opportunities to meet and interact with other international students in Paris.

### Echanges Internationaux à Paris:

EIAP is a group of over 1500 students from around the world. EIAP organizes excursions throughout France and Europe as well as activities and soirées in Paris. Please visit their Facebook page for more information: <https://www.facebook.com/EIAP2019/>

### Club Internationaux des Jeunes à Paris:

CIJP is an organization of international students in Paris. CIJP organizes excursions throughout France and Europe, as well as conversation workshops, visits to Parisian neighborhoods, museums, exhibitions, movies, theatre, concerts... Visit their website at: [http://www.club-international.org/cijp/index2\\_anglais.htm](http://www.club-international.org/cijp/index2_anglais.htm)

Check with your French university too as most have student groups and/or Tandem programs!

Additionally, <http://www.etudiantdeparis.fr/> offers many resources for both French and international students in Paris, including information about concerts, museum exhibits, theatre, and other activities. Furthermore, be sure to check with your Parisian university's study abroad office (*the Bureau des Relations Internationales*) for more information!

## Get Involved: Volunteer!

Below is a list of volunteer associations in Paris. Now go out and change the world already!

<http://www.paris.fr/benevolat>

<http://www.espacebenevolat.org/>

<http://www.francebenevolat.org/>

<http://www.paris.catholique.fr/-Benevolat-.html>

<http://www.acparis.org/>

<http://www.secretsofparis.com/volunteer-opportunities-paris/>

## Getting involved in Paris

Paris is a city of endless possibilities. Whatever your interest is, you are likely to find something to do in Paris. Remember, keeping active is one of the best ways to deal with culture shock and adaptation, as well as an excellent way to meet people and improve your French. Here's a list of things that former MICEFA students have done in the past. Maybe you would also like to....

- Sing Mozart's Requiem in the Sorbonne Chapel?
- Teach English to French children?
- Study French gastronomy and learn to cook some local specialties?
- Visit the European Parliament in a course field trip?  
Run the Paris Marathon?
- Bike to Giverny?
- Represent your University on the fencing team?
- Volunteer in a soup kitchen?
- Rollerblade to Versailles with a thousand other students, or Friday nights in Paris?
- Volunteer in the LGBT Center?

**Welcome to Paris!!!**

**Bienvenue à Paris!!**