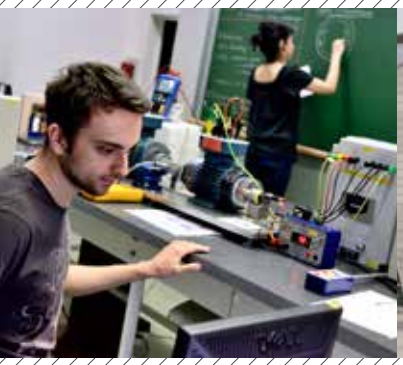
RENTRÉE

ÉCOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE DE LYON

PREPARE YOUR STAY

AT ENS DE LYON



ENS DE LYON

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WELCOME

Congratulations for being admitted to ENS de Lyon. We look forward to hosting you on our campus so you can contribute to the long tradition of developing excellence according to international standards, with a view to promoting diversity and innovation. We offer cutting-edge education, supported by internationally recognized research laboratories. Located in Lyon, a dynamic city at the crossroads of multiple European cultures, with an intense cultural life and a rich history, our campus offers a high-quality environment for our students to flourish and succeed in their academic projects. When you join our community, you will also have access to an enriching social and cultural environment, thanks to the activities the many student associations offer throughout the year.

This guide has been prepared to give you all the practical information you may need to prepare your arrival at ENS de Lyon. Additional information about the city of Lyon and our campus will be available in the welcome booklet you will receive upon your arrival.
We look forward to welcoming you soon,

Vincent Michelot, Vice-President for International Relations

THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE (DRI)[1]

The International Relations Office (DRI) promotes, coordinates and implements the international policy of ENS de Lyon and aims at:

- increasing ENS de Lyon's outreach on the international scene, by assisting the implementation of the communication policy and promotion of ENS de Lyon;
- ensuring the monitoring of developments in research and training on an international level;
- developing and coordinating partnerships on an international level (training and research);
- fostering, managing and promoting both inbound and outbound mobility (for students, teachers-researchers, administrative staff, etc.);
- leading and assisting the implementation of international projects;
- coordinating activities with internal and external partners.

The DRI is located on the ground floor of D2 building, Descartes campus (see p. 7).

- ***International Students Office:***
  Élodie MEYNARD (Manager)
  Nadine DONGUY (Incoming mobility)
  international@ens-lyon.fr
  student.exchange@ens-lyon.fr (for exchange students)

ASSET
ASSET is the student association for international students. The students participate in our Welcome Week and help our international students in their first steps at ENS de Lyon. With this Student Mentor program, they can assist you for administrative formalities. ASSET also organizes several events throughout the year.

Numerous student associations play a key part in ENS de Lyon's campus life, whether in the fields of culture, arts, sport or humanitarian action.
See the website :
http://www.ens-lyon.fr/en/campus-life/student-life/student-associations

[1] "Direction des Relations Internationales" in French

PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE

GETTING ADMITTED

Students from around the world can come to ENS de Lyon either as part of an exchange program, through ENS de Lyon's competitive entrance exam or based on their academic record. They can apply for a Master's program, enroll in a PhD or carry out an internship in one of ENS de Lyon's laboratories. Study programs are tailored to students' individual needs and various scholarships can help them fund their stay in France.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
Proficiency in French and/or English is required to be accepted to ENS de Lyon.
Contact your department for more information on specific conditions.

For Masters' students:
http://www.ens-lyon.fr/en/studies/student-information/applicants-what-are-language-requirements

LANGUAGE COURSES
The Language center offers classes for beginner, intermediate and advanced students in English, French as Foreign Language, and also other languages.
International students have access to French as Foreign Language Courses all along the year, depending on their level.

http://centredelangues.ens-lyon.fr/

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

2 types of accommodation will be available for our international students. **Please check your email for more information on this.**

ENS DE LYON HOUSING

ENS de Lyon has one student residence on campus, with a capacity of up to 361 students. The residence has an on-site advisor.
Different types of accommodation are available: individual rooms, 3, 4 or 5 room apartments, with rent ranging from €341 to €474 (2025-2026). In addition to the rent, a security deposit equivalent to one month's rent is required when the keys are handed over. This deposit will be returned to the resident at the end of the academic year. Any damage or outstanding invoices will be deducted from the deposit.
Residents need to take out rental liability insurance for their accommodation within the residence.

Please note that you cannot choose your room: the Housing Office will indicate the type of room that has been assigned to you and the number of your room when you arrive.

More details (equipment, services, practical information and photos) about the **Bonnamour Residence of Descartes' campus** at: http://www.ens-lyon.fr/en/campus-life/accommodation/bonnamour-residence

Please note that the residence is not equipped with:
– bed linen (sheets, blankets, pillows);
– cooking utensils.

Access to computer resources is activated upon enrolment at ENS de Lyon through the provision of a personal access code and password. The connection to a personal computer is established using a straight RJ45 cable (not provided).

CROUS DE LYON HOUSING

CROUS is the acronym of Centre Regional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires (Regional Centre for Secondary and Higher Education Services). CROUS has 27 university residences in Lyon and in its greater vicinity.

ENS de Lyon has an agreement with Crous for international students: some international students will be accommodated in CROUS residences (depending on the number of rooms available in the ENS de Lyon residence). The International Office will inform you about this.

OTHER OPTIONS

Students can opt for other alternatives:
– to be hosted by a French family in Lyon: www.expat-agency-lyon.com/english/;
– to choose in an intergenerational housing: http://www.esdes-intergenerations.net/ and "Le Pari Solidaire Lyon";
– flatshare: https://www.appartager.com/

OBTAINING A VISA

You do not need a visa if:
– you are a European citizen (European Economic Area, European Union),
– you are from the following countries: Switzerland, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Andorra, Monaco, The Republic of San Marino, The Vatican City.
In any other case, as regulations may change at any time, please refer to information given by the French embassy or consulate in your home country.
Apply at the consulates or embassies of France in your home country at least 3 months before departure.

Contact:
https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en/web/france-visas/studies-training

PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE

Before you leave, check the following:

WELCOME DAYS

Upon your arrival, a full Welcome Week will be organized especially for international students: courses in French as a foreign language (depending on your level), cultural activities, administrative information… All you need to know for a perfect start at ENS de Lyon.
This Welcome Week (free of charges) will take place at the end of August. We ask you to arrive before the beginning of this event **to take full advantage of the Welcome Week**.
More information will be sent by email regarding exact dates.

BUDGET

You will need at least €700-800 per month to live with sufficient comfort in Lyon. For the first month, you may need more than €1000 to meet expenses related to your arrival.
Be sure to have enough cash in euros, or a way to access funds from an ATM, to pay for your starting costs such as tuition fees (except for exchange students), home insurance, transportation, food, housing, furniture…

An idea of the cost of living in Lyon:

– Rhônexpress (https://www.rhonexpress.fr/en): express tram service between Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport and Lyon Part-Dieu. Single ticket: €16, or €10.50 for passengers under 25.
  Tip: buy your ticket on the Rhônexpress website or via their app for a faster and more convenient experience ;
– Subway - Tramway - Bus:
  - Ten-ticket booklet on your Técély card (valid on bus, tramway, subway): €17.40 for people under 26 and students aged 26-27. Regular price: €20.
  - Monthly subscription: €26 for people aged under 25 and students aged 26-27. Regular price: €74.10.
– Food: about €300 per month;
– A meal for one at CROUS restaurants: €1;
– A 250g baguette (French bread): €1 on average;
– A cinema ticket : €6 or €7 (student price at independent cinemas);
– High-speed intercity train ("TGV" in French) from Lyon to Paris: around €60 with a youth discount card (for people under 27 ; €49 per year). You can also buy online "Prem's" tickets: much cheaper if booked in advance (ideally up to three months before departure). Another option is the Ouigo high-speed train service, which usually operates from/to remote train stations but offers lower fares (e.g. Paris – Marne-la-Vallée to Lyon – Saint-Exupéry: €16).

COMMUNICATION

Make sure you can use your mobile phone in France or have sufficient funds to purchase phone credit upon your arrival.
Also, check if your phone is compatible with French SIM cards.

WEATHER

Lyon has a temperate climate. Temperatures and rainfall vary with the seasons. For more information: www.meteofrance.com.

WHAT TO PACK

TENTATIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BRING WITH YOU (ORIGINALS WHENEVER IT'S POSSIBLE):

– passport or national ID card (for EU citizens);
– birth certificate (for non-European citizens, bring the original and a French translation by an official translator in France or the Embassy of France in your home country);
– health insurance certificate (EU citizens will need their European Health Insurance Card; students from Quebec will need form SE401Q102bis or SE401Q106);
– health records (in case of serious illness) and your original medical prescription, as well as a French version made by your doctor for people following a particular medical treatment;
– proof of financial resources (scholarship certificate, bank statement…);
– French Immigration and Integration Bureau (OFII) form received from the French consulate (for non-EU citizens);
– letter of acceptance to ENS de Lyon;
– proof of residency in France;
– diplomas and transcripts (originals translated into French or English).

ITEMS TO BRING WITH YOU:

– power adaptors (for your phone, computer, etc.),
– bed linen and towels,
– bilingual dictionary,
– suitable clothing,
– laptop, other devices and their chargers.

UPON ARRIVAL

HOW TO GET TO LYON

BY PLANE

Lyon – Saint-Exupéry international airport (46 international and 32 national connecting flights) is less than an hour drive from Lyon.
It can easily and quickly be reached via the Rhônexpress:
https://www.rhonexpress.fr/en_GB/

– Departure: every 15 minutes
– Duration: 30 minutes
– Cost: €16 per person or €10.50 for passengers younger than 25 (online prices)

BY BUS

A broad range of destinations at very affordable prices:
– Flixbus: https://www.flixbus.fr/
– BlablaCar Bus: https://www.blablacar.fr/bus

BY TRAIN

– From Paris Roissy – Charles de Gaulle airport or Paris Gare de Lyon train station to Lyon Part-Dieu or Lyon Perrache train stations: 30 high-speed trains daily (two-hour journey);
– From Marseille: 1 hour and 40 minutes.
https://www.sncf-connect.com/
You may also want to use the Ouigo high-speed train service, which usually operates from/to remote train stations but at a more affordable price (starting price from Paris – Marne-la-Vallée to Lyon – Saint Exupéry: €16).
https://www.ouigo.com/

To get to downtown Lyon, you should take the train to Lyon Part-Dieu station. Be careful! Don't choose "Gare de Lyon" in your search: you will then end up in Paris!

GETTING TO ENS DE LYON

ENS de Lyon is located in the Gerland area of the 7th district of Lyon, near the Pasteur bridge on the left bank of the Rhône.

- RENÉ DESCARTES SITE
  15 parvis René Descartes, 69007 Lyon
  Tel. N°: (04 37 37) 60 00

- ENS DE LYON LIBRARY
  1 parvis René Descartes, 69007 Lyon
  Reception

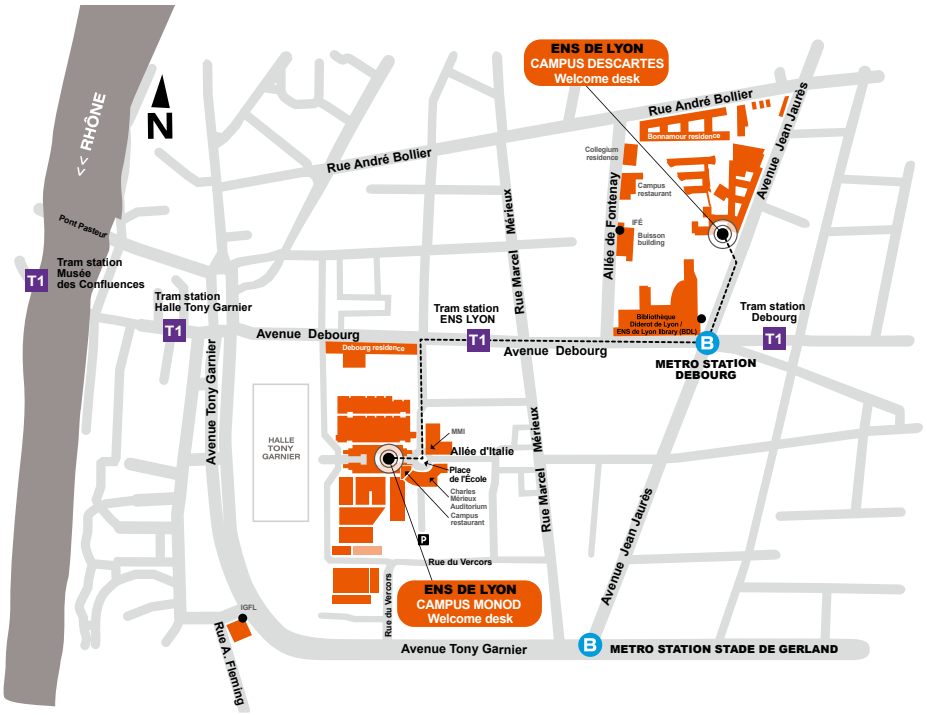
- FERDINAND BUISSON BUILDING
  19 allée de Fontenay, 69007 Lyon
  Tel. N°: 04 26 73 11 00

- JACQUES MONOD SITE
  46 allée d'Italie, 69007 Lyon
  Tel. N°: (04 72 72) 80 00

- IGFL SITE (Institut de Génomique Fonctionnelle de Lyon)
  32-34 avenue Tony Garnier, 69007 Lyon
  Reception/Security (PC Sécurité)
  Tel. N°: 04 26 73 13 00

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

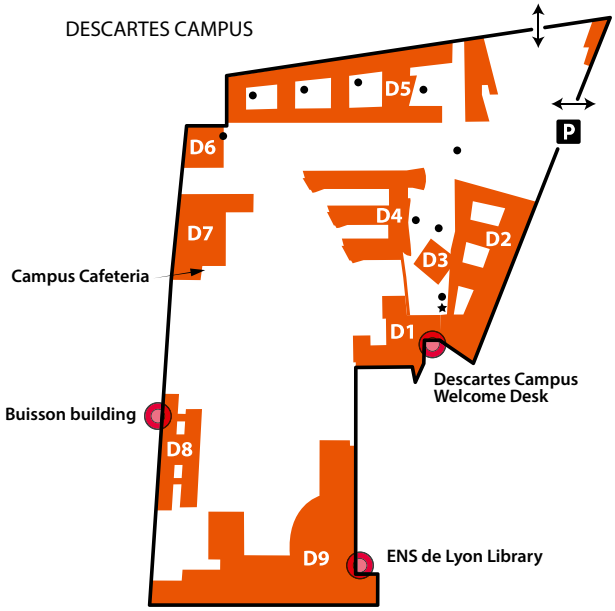
– Metro line B, towards Saint-Genis-Laval, Debourg Stop
– T1 Tramway or C22 Bus: Debourg Stop for Descartes Campus, ENS Lyon Stop for Monod Campus
– Vélo'v parking on the Descartes plaza and Place de l'École (Monod Campus)



Descartes Campus Welcome Desk
Kantor Theater and
Descartes Auditorium
D1 Presidency, Administration
D2 Descartes Amphitheater, teaching areas,
Vice-Presidency for Academic Affairs and Studies services
D3 Artemisia (Artemisia Gallery,
ENS Media, Accountancy Office)
D4 Research units
D5 Bonnamour Student Residence
D6 IAS Residence
(Lyon Institute for Advanced Studies Fellows)
D7 Campus Cafeteria
D8 Buisson building (French Institute of Education,
ENS Press, ENS Press bookshop, Administration)
D9 ENS de Lyon Library

P Parking access
Restricted Access

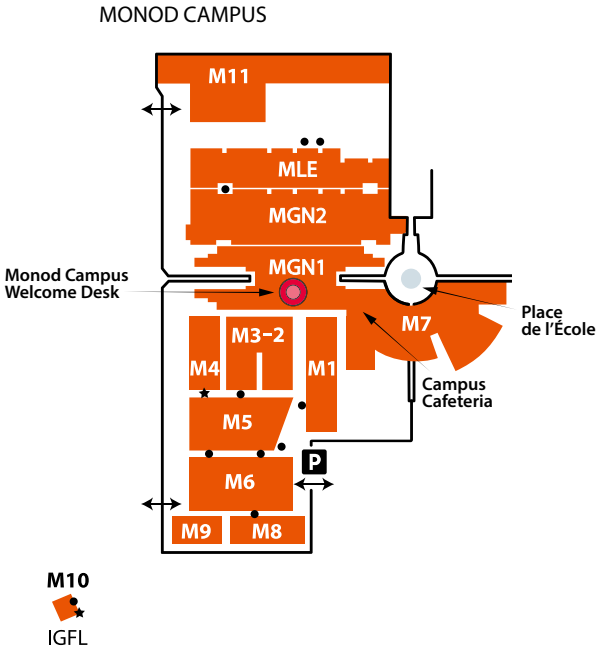
● Bicycle Parking
★ Repair and Air-filling Station
⟷ Bicycle Entrance



Monod Campus Welcome Desk
MGN1 Vice-Presidency for Research,
Administration, research units, Library, Persée
MGN2 et **MLE** Classrooms
M1 à **M10** Research units
M11 Closed
Access from Place de l'École:
Mérieux Auditorium, MMI,
(Institute for Mathematics and Computer Science)
Condorcet room, Campus Cafeteria

P Parking access
Restricted Access

● Bicycle Parking
★ Repair and Air-filling Station
⟷ Bicycle Entrance



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

From Lyon – Saint-Exupéry airport: take the Rhônexpress tram to the Part-Dieu train station, then change to the subway (line B), take a train for "Saint-Genis Laval Hôpital Lyon Sud" and get off at the "Debourg" station.
From the Part-Dieu train station: take the subway (line B) for "Saint-Genis Laval Hôpital Lyon Sud" and get off at the "Debourg" station.
From the Perrache train station: take the tram (line T1) to either "ENS Lyon" (for Monod site) or "Debourg" (for Descartes site).
https://www.tcl.fr/

You can also use the transport app "Citymapper" which will help you find the best route through the Lyon transportation network to your destination.

REMINDER
The Welcome Week takes place at the end of August. Thank you for arriving a few days before, as indicated in our emails, to take full advantage of this event. During those days, you will be helped by our dedicated teams to have the perfect start at ENS de Lyon, regarding all information below for administrative formalities.

FINALIZE YOUR ACCOMMODATION

To rent housing, you need to provide:
– housing insurance (that covers fire and water damage) including civil liability insurance;
– a security bond from your guarantor (except for students on campus residence of ENS de Lyon). The guarantor is the person who agrees to pay your rent in case you are unable to do so. The guarantor must be a French resident and be creditworthy. International students who do not have a guarantor can use the rent guarantor scheme called Visale (www.visale.fr);
– a security deposit equivalent to at least one month's rent. The deposit will be returned to you if there are no damages to your housing unit and if you have paid your rent and charges; (please note: do not close your bank account before all your fees are accounted for!)
– an inventory of fixtures at check-in and check-out;
– signature of a lease drawn up by the landlord.
The agreement must state the duration of the lease, the rental price and the terms of payment. Pay close attention to the rent specified in the agreement: this may or may not include rental charges.

For accommodation at the ENS de Lyon residence, the housing contract runs from the move-in date until July 7, 2026.
No extension is possible beyond this date.

HOUSING ALLOWANCE

CAF (Caisse d'Allocations Familiales) is the French public body in charge of housing benefits. As of 1 July 2026, access to CAF housing benefits will be restricted for non-EU international students. Please refer to the official CAF website for the latest information : https://caf.fr/

REGISTER AT ENS DE LYON

More information will be given upon your arrival by the International Student Team.
If you are a Master's student, you will have to register online.
If you are an exchange student (participating in an exchange program), you will be assisted. Please note that you don't have to pay either registration fees or CVEC (the Student Life and Campus Contribution).

BANK ACCOUNT

If you plan on staying in France for an extended period, we recommend that you open a French bank account for several reasons:
– avoid paying charges, especially if the currency of your country is not the Euro;
– be able to benefit from the National Health Scheme;
– own a payment card ("carte bancaire").
If needed, bank agencies also provide housing insurance for students.

HOW TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT IN FRANCE?
To make an appointment, go directly to a bank agency.
Bring:
– your passport,
– your visa,
– a proof of residence,
– an admission letter issued by ENS de Lyon.
Usually, opening a bank account for a relatively short period of time is free. However, fees depend on the bank.

WARNING: do not forget to close your account when leaving France.

GETTING YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE

HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
In France, international students are covered by the French social security system, often referred to as "la Sécu".
Social security includes health insurance, which reimburses part of your medical expenses. You are responsible for paying the remaining balance, unless you have taken out complementary health insurance, known in French as a "mutuelle".

HEALTH INSURANCE
• You are an EU student
You need to submit to the French Health Care System your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) covering the period of your stay in France. In this case, you are exempt from joining the French student system. You don't need to register online.

• ***You are a non-EU student and study in France:***

– For stays longer than three months, you must obtain health insurance coverage (mandatory and free of charge). You need to register at https://etudiant-etranger.ameli.fr/#/, regardless of your age. To register for French social security (CPAM), the International Student Office will provide the necessary information.

– For stays of less than three months, you must be covered by your home country's health insurance or by private insurance, with detailed coverage translated into French or English.

European health insurance cardholders cannot sign up for student social security: you must obtain the European Health Insurance Card from your Social Security Office or provide detailed proof of private health insurance coverage (translated into French or English) and valid for the duration of your stay in France.

If you are from Quebec, you do not need to sign up for student social security. However, you must present Form SE401Q106 to the Primary Health Insurance Fund (CPAM), which will give you a document to present when receiving healthcare services. Your medical expenses will be reimbursed by the CPAM.

COMPLEMENTARY INSURANCE

For better coverage of your medical expenses, you can take out a complementary insurance. You can choose between different student insurances such as:

– SMERRA: https://smerra.fr/
– LMDE: https://www.lmde.fr/
– ADH: https://www.assurances-etudiants.com/
– HEYME: https://heyme.care/fr

OBTAINING YOUR RESIDENCE PERMIT

Depending on your visa status, you may need to apply for a residence permit upon arrival.

Usually, if you have a 3 month VCS short-stay visa or a six-month visa, the procedure does not apply to you. Long-stay visas (between 6 and 12 months) usually serve as a residence permit but you have three months from your date of arrival in France to validate it.

WARNING: you have three months to make arrangements for your residence permit. If you don't abide by the rules, you will be considered as an illegal resident.

MULTISERVICE UNIVERSITY CARD

ENS de Lyon is a member of the ComUE Université de Lyon, which federates most of the higher education institutions of Lyon.

All staff and students of the member institutions of the ComUE have a multiservice card called Izly card. You will be issued this card when you enroll at ENS de Lyon. This card can be used to:

– enter the premises of ENS de Lyon;
– pay for food and drinks at CROUS university restaurants and cafeterias;
– borrow books from libraries.

For specific problems with your Izly money card, please contact the Student Welfare Office (CROUS) directly:
assistance-izly@crous-lyon.fr

Please note that, after printing your card, you will need to wait 48h to receive an activation email, at your @ens-lyon.fr address.

INTERNET AND EMAIL

All ENS de Lyon students have access to the Internet through their personal account.

Once your registration is complete, you can access your account directly using your student email address: firstname.familyname@ens-lyon.fr.

This account also enables you to access ENS de Lyon's intranet portal. Do not forget to check your account regularly since all the administrative departments will contact you through this address.

THANKS

Many thanks to everyone who helped put this practical guide together.

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ENS DE LYON