



France

Country guide for new EPIET/EUPHEM fellows

Training sites:

Paris Institut Pasteur (IP), Paris

Santé Publique France, Département des Maladies
Infectieuses (SpF-DMI), Paris

Santé Publique France, cellule régionale Paca et Corse (SpF-
Marseille), Marseille

Hospices Civils de Lyon (HCL), Lyon

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Disclaimer: The guide is intended to provide general information only. A fellow should always seek individual and / or professional advice tailored to their personal situation.

Please note: This is a living document. If you find any information to be incorrect or out of date, or there is anything you wish to add, please amend the guide (and date it accordingly) and send the new version to your cohort representative for uploading onto the EAN country guides website.

Contents

1. Summary: The first steps to take when moving to France	4
1.1 Before you arrive in France, we advise:	4
1.2 After you arrive in France we advise:	4
2. Registration in France	5
3. Finding accommodation	5
3.1 Areas to live	6
3.2 Type of housing	8
3.3 Housing contract and typical terms and conditions of renting	9
3.4 Necessary documents to get accommodation	10
3.5 Amenities: Internet, Telephone, Television, Gas, Electricity, Water, Heating etc.	11
3.6 Furniture and household goods	11
3.7 Reimbursement of relocation expenses	12
3.8 Useful links and websites	12
4. Finances	12
4.1 Opening a bank account	12
4.2 Paying your taxes and other deductions	13
4.3. Unemployment	14
5. Administration	14
5.1 Signing your contract	14
5.2 Salary correction factor	15
5.3 Receiving your paycheck	15
5.4 Retirement Pension (public/private)	15
6. Health and Wellbeing	15
6.1 The healthcare system in France	16
6.2 Health Insurance	17
6.3 Accessing the healthcare system	18
7. Other personal Insurance	19
7.1 Home, car and liability insurance	19
7.2 Travel insurance	19
8. Working at training sites	20
8.1 Getting to & from the city/institute	20
8.2 General orientation/onboarding	20
8.3 Your office space	21

8.4	Institute / department access card _____	21
8.5	Laptop and mobile _____	21
8.6	Remote Access _____	21
8.7	Vacation days _____	22
8.8	The typical working day _____	22
8.9	Meals and breaks _____	22
9	<i>Living in France</i> _____	23
9.1	Getting around _____	23
9.2	Language schools _____	23
9.3	Recreational activities, sports, worth visiting, meeting people _____	24
9.4	Supermarkets _____	26
9.5	Cultural insights _____	26
10	<i>Moving with a family</i> _____	26
10.1	Social benefits for expectant parents and families: _____	27
11	CONTACTS _____	27
11.1	Key contacts at IP _____	27
11.2	Key contacts at SpF, Marseille _____	27
11.3	Key contacts at HCL _____	27
12.2	Contact information of current and previous fellows _____	28

1. Summary: The first steps to take when moving to France

These are the proposed steps to take when moving to France based on the experience of fellows from previous cohorts. More detailed descriptions and explanations of each part of the process can be found throughout the document.

1.1 Before you arrive in France, we advise:

- Make sure ECDC gives you a confirmation letter for the fellowship in French and a letter in French and in English explaining your status. That also helps a lot before you receive your contract.
- Ask for a « lettre d'attestation d'emploi » at the Human Resources Service. The letter should state your employer, the duration of your contract (24 months) and your annual/monthly net Salary. This helps you a lot during your search for a flat, as I signed my contract on the first working day on 11th September only. This makes it nearly impossible to find a flat before.
- Ask for French translation of your birth certificate from your country local authorities.
- For moving your furniture. The company Eurosender ([Eurosender : plate-forme numérique pour des services logistiques mondiaux](#)) was the cheapest one (about 1200 euros including insurance and help from the driver) to move the furniture from my apartment in Brussels to Marseille using a big moving van.
- When moving with a pet that is allowed in the cabin of a plane: most European airline companies allow you to add a pet to your ticket, for a fee (60 euros for Brussels airlines) using their online platform. However, it is advised that you call them because there is a limited number of pets per flight. Before you fly with your pet, they need to have a pet passport, need to be up-to-date with their vaccines and have a certificate of being fit-to-leave (for Brussels airlines this certificate cannot be older than 48 hours before your flight). You also need to transport the pet in a bag that complies with airlines regulations. Once you land in France there's nothing else you need to do. You don't have the register of your pet in the country (this may be different if you are coming from outside the EU).

1.2 After you arrive in France we advise:

- You will need copies of RIB, CDD, your ID AND a mobile number from a company operating in France, whenever you are dealing or you are about to deal with French bureaucracy. Settle these as soon as possible as these will help you to sort out issues that concern your administration as you are settling in France.

Prior to commencing the fellowship programme, we strongly recommend that new fellows refer to the

[‘Administrative Decision EU-track ECDC Fellowship Programme Cohort 2025.docx \(europa.eu\)’](#) document in which further information is provided on contracts, rights and duties of fellows and other administrative details.

2. Registration in France

*Residing as an EU citizen in another EU country: “As an EU citizen, you have the right to move to any EU country to live, work, study, or look for a job. You can stay in another EU country **for up to 3 months without registering** there but you may need to report your presence. The only requirement is to hold a **valid national identity card or passport**. If you want to stay longer than 3 months, you may need to register your residence.” Details for each EU country can be found here: https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/residence/residence-rights/index_en.htm*

Registration for EU citizens is not mandatory, and you can perfectly live your life in France without it. However, some countries outside of the EU may want this card to show you are a resident in France when using their consulates abroad (the Turkish consulate in Marseille for example needed this card) so if you need to obtain this card or just want too. You can do this by first filling in a form on the website of your mairie, afterwards you will receive a text for an appointment at the mairie to pick up your card. The whole procedure to obtain it is free.

3. Finding accommodation

Before contacting an estate or housing agent, it is a good idea to contact the current EPIET/EUPHEM fellow(s) or a named contact at the host site, who may know of a place that is available to rent.

France (at least Paris and during autumn also Lyon) can be pure nightmares for renting a studio. This is different in Marseille, where finding housing is generally easier and also cheaper. In brief, it is difficult to get anything immediately. Unless you know somebody there to help or have somebody to host you for a while, you have several options that you may consider at first, so that you have already an accommodation when you get there. Most fellows that do not know anybody in their host city, resolve this by staying in an Airbnb or another form of rental accommodation for the first month to three months (keep in mind when renting something temporary that you will spend three weeks in Spetses for the intro course during your first months in France).

When looking for rental apartments you should have ideally a permanent contract, proof of some salary (at least 3 months), a French guarantor, or a bank that offer financial guarantee. In the case you need a bank for

financial guarantee, you would need to have at least enough money to cover the rent for 12 or 24 months in advance to give it to the bank to hold on for you and have passed already the probation time.

If you are 30 years or younger, there is also the Visale guarantor service through the French government. This service is available to all EU-citizens in France (if you meet the age criteria) and with it the French state acts as a guarantor. Although, in my experience not a lot of landlords except this form of guarantee.

Every landowner or agency requires some of the above or all of the above. (See later sections in this document for details of how to prepare a "dossier" before visiting an apartment to rent). Best period to find an apartment is before September (many French people do their moving during the summer months and before September) but this will be impossible without employment contract or connections. In general, in France you may find an apartment on Le Bon Coin (pretty similar to US Craig's List) or Se Loger (real estate website that offers rentals). On these there can be a few scams such as 500€/month for a 40 m² in a posh area. Only one photo can be a pretty good indicator, or an email address as 1st contact instead of using the platform.

You may want to contact the embassy of your country and check if they can help, or some house rental web sites run by your nationals. Also opting to use a housing agency (such as <https://www.parisattitude.com/fr/>) can be a wise and safe solution even if an expensive one (expect to pay 1 or 2 months' rent in fees). For Marseille, this agency ([Agence de relocation | Chasseur immobilier - Confiez votre projet à un expert de la mobilité](#)) can also help with finding housing and getting settled in the city (taking out electricity contract, setting up an appointment with a bank to get an account etc.) but they are fairly pricey (I think around 1000-2500 euros depending on what services you want them to perform for you).

In Paris, an option that may be worth considering is applying for housing at the "Cité universitaire internationale de Paris." It is located approximately 40 minutes away from Santé publique France offices by bike. This campus is situated in a beautiful park in the 14th arrondissement of Paris. Housing there is significantly more affordable compared to the regular market.

<https://bienvenue.ciup.fr/questionnaire/?lang=en>

3.1 Areas to live

- **Paris, SpF-DMI:**

- SpF is in Saint Maurice just off Paris, but just 20 min by tube, or 30 min by bike from central Paris. Saint Maurice area is nice but a bit pricy. Other surrounding areas are Vincennes, and Saint

Mandé, also very nice but a bit expensive. For cheaper options, you can look at Maisons-Alfort (metro line 8) just south of St Maurice or Joinville le Pont (RER A) east of Bois de Vincennes.

- SpF is near the biggest park in Paris (Bois de Vincennes) and it may be a good idea to live in this area to enjoy a bit of green areas (pretty much lacking in the rest of Paris). However, you may lose a bit of the real Paris if you live in this area; living in Paris with good transport connection to the SpF may be better if you want to enjoy the Parisian evening life. Central zones in Paris are also very expensive, so it is a matter of being persistent in your apartment search until you find something affordable, convenient for going to work and yet near the lively areas of town.

- **Paris, IP:**

- IP is located in the 15th Arrondissement. Many people at IP live in it or close to it. You can also try to live along the metro lines 6 or 12 in other Arrondissements, as you will have good connections. However, you can also look at other good metro or bus connections. You could also come by bike or even car to IP. The bike you can park within IP. There are special garages for the cars.

- **Marseille, SpF:** Training site located in the La Joliette neighbourhood (in a building that is shared with other agencies such as the Agence Régionale de Santé), in the 3rd arrondissement. Marseille is a very walkable and cyclable city it's fairly easy to get to the training site from most neighbourhoods.

- 1st arrondissement: this area can be great (it's the city centre, where the Vieux-Porte) is located but it can also be noisy. So before moving, check the area at night and during the weekends.
- 2nd arrondissement: this is mainly a commercial area without much residential buildings and facilities
- 3rd arrondissement: the neighbourhood of the training site. It's very well connected with multiple metro and tram stops (and of course buses). However, it's mostly a commercial neighbourhood with a lot of office buildings and shops.
- 4th and 5th: These are really nice residential neighbourhoods, with lots of things to do in terms of bars, coffee shops, bakeries etc. Quite some people from SpF also live here and in the 4th there's the Parc Longchamp, which is lovely. The whole 'Cinq Avenues' neighbourhood around the Parc Longchamp is great! There's a tram that stops almost in front of the training site and there's the metro too.
- 7th and 8th: These neighbourhoods are more in the South, so a bit further away from the site. In the 8th there's the tram that goes directly to the training site, so that's very easy. In general, the 8th is better connected, and there's also more to do in terms of sports (more yoga/pilates studio's etc.). The 7th however is closer to the Vieux-Porte and city centre, next to the nearest

- beach (Plage des Catalans) and more like a family-friendly quite neighbourhood. Both areas are a bit more expensive compared to other neighbourhoods in the city.
- 9th: this is a great area, it's very green and borders the Calanaque national park. However, it's quite far away from both the institute and the city centre.
 - Northern neighbourhoods: these are basically the neighbourhoods that are North of the institute. (metro stop Gèze and up). These are generally not so well-connected transport-wise, and there are less things to do in terms of parks, beaches, coffee shops etc. They can also feel more unsafe due to more trash on the street, less street lighting etc.
 - **Lyon, HCL:** Training site is located in Croix-Rousse neighbourhood. Any areas within metroline C and A are good choices.
 - 1st and 4th arrondissements can be great as you'd be close to the hospital. Just check how many bars are in the street/under the windows, as it's the lively centre of the city!
 - The 2nd is southern, between the 2 rivers (Saône & Rhône), and can be divided in 3 main areas:
 - Above the Perrache train station is still what we qualify as city centre (lots of shop)
 - Southern the train station: you first have an early 20th century buildings area
 - then as you get closer to Confluence (where the 2 rivers join) is a more modern but expensive neighbourhood
 - 6th is just across the Rhône, so quite close. I'd qualify it as "bourgeois", hence more quiet
 - 3rd and 7th can be a good choice if close to a metro station, but I would avoid Part Dieu (lots of corporate buildings) and Guillotière (popular to unsafe neighbourhood, depending on the streets)
 - 8th if not far from the D line can be cheaper. Far from the metro would mean a longer commute.

3.2 Type of housing

- What to expect: studio, 2 room apartments are possible in Lyon and Marseille.
- By French regulations and insurance policies you're not permitted to pay more than 30% of your net income as rent. Some landowners are a bit more flexible on this (up to 40%) but as a rule of thumb your fellowship salary will seriously limit your choices.
- Prices in Paris vary, within the centre they can be as high as 1200 euros for a furnished 20/30m² studios. Outside the inner ring prices ranges are lower (apart from Vincennes/Saint Mandé, which are very expensive). Paris had a good public transport system, so one way to look for a spot to live might be looking at the metro lines crossing your institute.
- In Marseille, prices also vary but in general a one-bedroom apartment costs around 700-900 euros

(depending on things like neighbourhood and if it's furnished or not). Cheaper apartments are also available, but it may take a bit longer to find one.

- SpF-DMI: One option could be to try to acquire a short-term lease on an apartment with the Hôpital National de Saint Maurice. SpF-DMI is based in the grounds of this hospital and SpF-DMI staff have access to these facilities. This service can provide you with a small apartment (in the region of 15m²) for a number of months that you need, if available. There is no deposit required and at least a month's notice is required upon leaving. It can be a good bridging option. It is necessary to speak with the coordinator early (during the summer before you arrive), Madame Robert (tel: 01.43.96.64.10 or drh@hopital-saintmaurice.fr).

- IP: Inform coordinator, HR etc. who you are and that you are looking for an apartment through contacts or the IP list (STAPA or MAASC). Try to get into that list, that is the best option you have to get an affordable and nice apartment in Paris. They all might help you a great deal in disseminating your request to find an apartment in Paris.

IP: IP offers several housing solutions including a housing platform: <https://www.pasteur.fr/en/housing-paris>. Institut Pasteur can offer up to 12 months of housing at Cite Internationale Universitaire de Paris (<http://www.ciup.fr/en/>). For a 18 square meter studio including bathroom and kitchenette you will pay around 800 euros.

- Agencies:

<https://www.paruvendu.fr/immobilier/pro/allocation-paris-75-43698/>

- They will set up an appointment between you and the property owner to avoid the frustrating queue to visit an apartment with another 40 people waiting to see the same "box".

<https://www.bonapart.fr/>

- This agency seemed to be a bit more relaxed in terms of requirements for renting.

<https://www.sojourn.fr/>

- Lyon-based, had a very nice experience with them and found a better apartment that I dared to hope for

3.3 Housing contract and typical terms and conditions of renting

- Before signing the contract, you can negotiate several weeks free of rent if you need to do some work such as paintings or repairs (which is frequent).
- Signing the contract you will need to provide:
 - 1 month rent as a deposit (caution or dépôt de garantie)
 - In some cases, you'll have to pay one, two or more months of rent in advance
 - Possible agent fees, the fee is usually a month's rent

- Home Insurance (Assurance habitation). You must provide proof of the insurance upon reception of the keys and then each subsequent year, on the request of your landlord (roughly €250/year). Check if your bank offers home insurance! This is usually the cheapest option. Some examples of insurance companies:
 - MATMUT – <http://www.matmut.fr>
 - AGF – <http://www.agf.fr>
 - AXA - <http://www.axa.fr>
 - GAN - <http://www.gan.fr>
 - MAAF – <http://www.maaf.fr/>
- Note that on top of the rent (roughly between 800 and 1200 euros for a 20-30m² furnished studio, depends on the area) you will need to add:
 - Forfeit for water, building management costs, and gas, if there is (roughly €100/ month or more),
 - Internet connection (€50 plus monthly fee of 15-20), and
 - Home Insurance (Assurance habitation) (€15-22 per month)
 - Electricity which may be very expensive (€50-100/month if not even more).
- You can leave whenever you want, given 3 months' notice. In cities this could be only one month. Same notice period for the landlord. [A law protecting the tenant, the landlord cannot require the tenant to leave during the months between mid-October and mid-March.]

3.4 Necessary documents to get accommodation

First thing you need when you're looking for apartment is a dossier. This is mostly used in electronic format, but it might be a good idea to prepare also some paper copies.

The dossier will be used by Agencies and landlords to select candidates. Usually, the first step of selection is who gets to attend the viewing of the apartment in person. The dossier must include:

- ECDC fellowship confirmation letter (original) and letter of attestation stating your income. Preferably an employment contract (CDD) for the duration of entire fellowship.
- At least three recent pay slips
- Copy of your identity paper
- Evidence of other income or savings.
- In many cases you will need to provide a guarantor i.e. someone who agrees to pay the rent, if you default. Colleagues at your institute might be prepared to do this for you. They just need to provide a letter with salary statements and a copy of the passport. The alternative is to get a bank

guarantee. This is a special account in which you put 6 months' rent and pay the bank to look after it. Staff members working at IP can obtain a guarantee for up to 2x12 months at BNP (bank). Also check GarantMe.fr which is nowadays commonly accepted as a guarantor (see notes below).

- Estate agents will also require:
 - Your last income tax certificate (no need to translate this usually)
 - Particulars of one's bank account (RIB by a French bank)
 - Three recent receipts for paying the rent ("quittance de loyer") from your previous apartment.

You might be also asked for your previous payments for your housing (i.e. AirBnB invoices, hotel costs, etc.). It is normal. The more paper you have in your dossier the better ;)

GarantMe: To avoid unnecessary costs you can get your dossier pre-accepted by GarantMe (for free) and use the attestation they issue as you search for an apartment. When you've secured the apartment check if the landlord actually requires a guarantor. In my case it was waived. The actual guarantor service by GarantMe costs several hundred euros per year.

Pets: You're not usually expected to mention pets or asking permission for having pets in your apartment when you look for housing in France. I was told it is a free country.

3.5 Amenities: Internet, Telephone, Television, Gas, Electricity, Water, Heating etc.

- Getting a French telephone number is most likely necessary as there are many places that only accept French numbers during registration and signing up. Save yourself some time and get a phone number. Popular companies include Free, Bouygues Telecom, Orange and SFR. (At first, it can be tricky to open a French bank account because a French mobile phone number is required and vice versa to obtain a phone number a French bank account is often required. Ask your colleagues/acquaintances if you can use theirs to break the vicious circle and change them afterwards.)
- Same companies also cater for Internet and Television. Look for bundled prices to save money.
- Electricity, water and heating are often (but not always) included in a rental contract.

3.6 Furniture and household goods

- Apartment can be either furnished or non-furnished. Beware that concept of "furnished" is well described in French legislation.

- If you don't want to buy new furniture, this is the most popular website in France for selling second-hand items: <https://www.leboncoin.fr/annonces/offres>

3.7 Reimbursement of relocation expenses

*Eligible moving costs [for reimbursement] include removal of household goods and transportation costs for the fellow and family members from any place within the EU/EEA to the place of employment and from place of employment to any place within EU/EEA. Since 2022, fellows, are entitled to a maximum lump sum of **EUR 2 500** for fellows without family obligations or **EUR 3 500** for fellows with family obligations. This amount is split into two equal instalments, at the start and end of the Fellowship respectively. Kindly also note that the reimbursement to the fellow is done according to each host site's reimbursement policy, i.e. the host site may reimburse the fellow the actual costs incurred, provided they do not fall above the eligible amount, and not the lump sum.*

Advice: At the beginning of the fellowship, you will have a lot of expenses (travel tickets, relocation cost, costs arising during modules, rent + deposits, etc.). ECDC takes many months (up to 6 months) to reimburse those expenses, so it is wise to have a good sum of euros on your bank account at the start of the fellowship. Each training site has their own step for reimbursement for relocation costs. Secure all invoices and provide for reimbursement all of your expenses (even if significantly over the relocation expenses). It is important to be transparent of the true expenses of starting a fellowship.

3.8 Useful links and websites

- leboncoin.fr
- Seloger.fr
- Bienici.fr

4. Finances

4.1 Opening a bank account

The following documents are required to open a bank account:

- EPIET/EUPHEM confirmation of fellowship letter and "lettre d'attestation" from your employer
- Your contract
- Copy of your identity card or passport

- Copy of your rental contract or receipts for paying the rent (“quittance de loyer”) avec l’adresse postale.

If you don’t have an apartment yet you can ask a colleague to write a letter to say that you are living temporarily with them, and they need to provide a copy of a utility bill and a copy of their passport. They need that as a proof for your address. Without all of that it is hardly impossible to open your bank account. Beware that the bank might/most likely will send pin codes and user numbers to this address.

Usually opening a bank account requires an appointment. After you’ve been accepted as a customer the process is quite fast, and you can expect to have access to your bank account right away or in a few days. Online banking and acquiring the bank card can take a bit longer as some of the information is sent by mail.

IP: IP has a cooperation with BNP Paribas. This is why I opened my bank account there. One also need in France for your own flat a mandatory insurance (= Assurance habitation). I got that one from BNP Paribas as well, which was the easiest way to get it. By the way – there is a BNP Paribas branch directly in Rue du Dr Roux, that is even called BNP Paribas Pasteur. Its director (Mr. Thue) speaks well English.

Other training sites don’t have any agreements with banks. You can search for banks with low cost for a basic account, (e.g. CIC). It will cost you roughly € 50 /year. Some banks are more expat-friendly (CCF) but customer service in English will be hard to find.

N26 is a good option if you want to open a virtual bank. It takes 24 hours to open the account if you have all the documents and you can decide whether to have a physical or virtual debit card.

Bunq is also a good option for opening a virtual bank account. They can provide you with a French IBAN, next to another European IBAN (I had a Dutch bank account with them and was able to open a French account using their app). When you open a French account with them and change the language of the app to French, it becomes possible to export your RIB. They also provide physical and virtual debit cards. To open a French account with them, if you already have an account from another EU-country, you also don’t need to have any French documents such as a rental contract etc.

Other virtual banks operating in France should be OK if they provide you with a RIB.

4.2 Paying your taxes and other deductions

Taxes are automatically withdrawn from the income (since 2019). But you still have to make a declaration stating how much money has been deducted from your salary.

Payment of taxes in France occurs in May following the end of the tax year and payment is made in one lump sum based on your tax earnings for that entire year. As a new resident, you will receive your personal tax number (numéro fiscal) latest at this point. If you do not receive it, you can request it by filling out a form at the tax office. See more information: <https://www.impots.gouv.fr/accueil>

In general, for the first declaration (before having the fiscal number) it is convenient to go to the tax office. They are there to help you if you have any doubts.

4.3. Unemployment

If relevant to the fellow's personal / family situation:

- You can get in touch with your HR person to get a better idea of what you are entitled to.
- Before the end of your contract, sign up in Pole Emploi to ask for unemployment. They will get in touch to organize a meeting and will open your rights.

IMPORTANT!

Please note that payment of local taxes and charges is entirely the responsibility of the fellow. Any information provided in this guide reflects the experience of previous fellows and may not be relevant to the situation of incoming fellows. If in doubt, always ask for advice.

5. Administration

The fellowship programmes are funded by ECDC and the participating training sites in the Member States. EU-track fellows are employed by training sites that have signed an agreement with ECDC to fund their salaries. MS-track fellows receive the local salary from their training institutes. The participating institutes will cover the costs for office space and fieldwork of the fellows.

5.1 Signing your contract

You can read about French work contracts here: <https://thegoodlifeinfrance.com/cdd-and-cdi-employment-contracts-in-france/> Your contract will likely be a CDD (Contract Duration Déterminée).

HCL: You contact persons will help you with this and you should have the contract available for signing during the first week of your arrival. Check that your name and other information has been spelled correctly the duration of CDD is as long as possible (the longer the better it is when looking for apartment). Also, make sure that there's no trial period in your contract. A trial period is common in France, but it does not apply to EPIET/EUPHEM fellows. The contract at SpF is signed on the first day of work and is a CDD for two years. It is in French and you will not be provided with an English version.

5.2 Salary correction factor

Pending cost of living and other factors in your host country, a correction factor for salaries may be applied by ECDC. Please enquire with the Fellowship Programme Office at ECDC if you need to know the correction factor for salaries in your host country. These correction factors may change and the most up to date information should be available from the Programme Office.

It must be specified in the contract that this is the salary after tax (après impôts).

5.3 Receiving your paycheck

SpF: Payment is made at the end of the month (usually on the 25th) directly into your bank account. You receive your paychecks by post. Keep them because you need them to declare your taxes! Especially the one for December. You will be given 12 monthly payments per year.

HCL: Same as above. You receive paychecks by post, or if the HR hasn't passed your address to salaries, from the HR office. If all goes well, you should receive your first paycheck in the end of September.

5.4 Retirement Pension (public/private)

If you've worked in several EU countries, you may have accumulated pension rights in each of them. You'll have to apply to the pension authority in the country where you're living or where you last worked. If you've never worked in the country where you're living, your host country will forward your claim to the one you last worked in. That country is then responsible for processing your claim and bringing together records of your contributions from all the countries you worked in. Source: https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/retire-abroad/state-pensions-abroad/index_en.htm

Your employer is paying into the national pension system for you. You don't have to do anything, unless you want a complementary pension, (in this occasion for more information you can ask the HR service).

6. Health and Wellbeing

6.1 The healthcare system in France

Prior to arriving in your host country, please note the following on accessing healthcare: *'If you already have health insurance in an EU country (i.e. your home country), you can ask your insurer for a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), free of charge. Sometimes you can find it on the back side of your national insurance card. The card is proof that you are insured in an EU country. If you don't have your EHIC, or you can't use it (for instance, for private health care), you can't be refused treatment [in your host country], but you might have to pay the full amount for your treatment and claim reimbursement once you get home.'*

You can read more about the and what the EHIC entitles you to [here](#)

You will be assured like all French employees via the social security system, the Sécurité Sociale. Your employer is paying your contribution with each salary. In addition, it's highly advisable to have a private health insurance (mutuelle), as social security only covers about 60% of medical expenses (depending on the specific procedure, limited or no coverage of dental care and ophthalmology).

Getting a social security number and Carte Vitale (Health Insurance Card) are several months long process. Get started early! Once you have received the security number you have to apply for your Carte Vitale. After that, you will be covered as any other French person. Fellows have immediate health protection from the first day of your employment on but before obtaining your Carte Vitale you will have to pay any medical consultations and later on ask for reimbursement. If you have received your social security number but cannot get your Carte Vitale, go to the Caisse Primaire d' Assurance Maladie (CPAM) in your neighbourhood, they will solve the problem for you. You can usually make appointments online.

Two options for private health insurance in France:

1. A so called "mutuelle":

Those are associative non-profit organizations that are based on a solidarity principle. This is what most French people have and most advisable, also less expensive than a private insurance, at least if you want to have proper coverage. There are many "mutuelles" and you will find them as soon as you consult your human resources department. It's easiest to go to their offices to ask for information.

At SpF, there is a mutuelle for all employers that you will be assigned to when you start working. This is mandatory and you can't change it. To obtain coverage by a "mutuelle", you still need a security number.

2. Private complementary health insurance: These are private insurance companies.

6.2 Health Insurance

- For application, see this web site: <https://www.ameli.fr/>
 - It is possible to apply via la Caisse Primaire d' Assurance Maladie (CPAM).
 - Each arrondissement has one CPAM office and if you want to apply for your number you can search for the CPAM in your arrondissement (where you live) and ask there the details about the application. In Marseille, for most arrondissement the CPAM is in La Joliette, about five minutes on foot from the training site. Generally, you will need to fulfil the form "demande d'ouverture des droits à l'assurance maladie", and provide the following documents:
 - 1) photocopy of passport
 - 2) birth certificate translated into French by an accredited translator, (no joke - this might be the translating authority of your embassy in Paris for example or a certified translator in your city before you move, that's how I did it. I send the scanned BC to HR then and that was enough. A lot of countries provide an "International birth certificate" in multiple languages. The one from The Netherlands was in French/English/Spanish and this was sufficient for the CPAM)
 - 3) work contract
 - 4) bank details (RIB)
 - + pay slips of your first two months of work in France (you will of course not have this in the beginning, but it would be good to go there at least with one)
 - + Photocopy of your apartment rental contract or a pay slip of the electricity company (EDF) or the phone company, stating your French address. If you still don't have a French address, you can write a note explaining your situation.
-
- **IP Fellows** : Your HR Team at Institut Pasteur is initiates application for Carte Vitale. At IP, you have to have a so-called mutuelle and the company is determined to be Vivinter. A low and high coverage option exists, where you can choose of, which differentiates in terms of coverage for eyeglasses and dental care (inlays etc.). The amount will be distracted from your monthly salary.
 - **SpF Fellows, Lyon**: You will need to sort out the social security number and *Carte Vitale* yourself.
 - **SpF fellow, Marseille**: You also need to sort out the social security number and *Carte Vitale* yourself. Although, your supervisor and the administrative assistant will definitely help you if you ask.
 - **SpF Paris**: For private medical insurance see <https://mgas.fr/accueil> (associated to SPF, the fees are a bit smaller than usual).

6.3 Accessing the healthcare system

You can use Doctolib (an app and website) to book any appointment with a doctor, dentist, orthodontist, physiotherapist etc. In Doctolib you can select your language of preference, including English. For a GP appointment, you can usually see a GP the same day or the next day using Doctolib. If you are satisfied with the GP you've seen, you can ask (the GP may also propose this) if they can register you as their patient. Often other medical specialist will ask you who your GP is and then this comes in hand. If you want to see a specialist, you'll have to get a prescription from a GP first (this depends on the specialist and your mutuelle). If you for example want to see a gynaecologist, you can make an appointment directly without going to your GP first, but you may have to pay a fee.

6.3.1 Emergency services

- For emergency services, these are the numbers used in France: 15, 18, 112 and 114 (114 is the one to use if there's a pressing emergency). 114 can also be accessed using a computer and SMS texts.
- For medical care outside of office hours, but not so urgent that you need to call the emergency services. There's the SOS Médecins service. This is their website for Marseille: [SOS Médecins Marseille](#) You can make an appointment here to for example see a doctor during the weekend.

6.3.2 Primary care

- **HCL:** You will have one or two medical visits before your contracts start, they might be asked for previous vaccinations and serology be sure to have those documents with you.

6.3.3 Mental health support services

- **SpF Marseille:** I am not aware of any mental health support services such as a designed HR person or psychologists through the institute. You can find an English (or other language) speaking psychologist again using Doctolib.

6.3.4 Travel clinics/where to get vaccinations

- **For Paris,** this clinic allows you to make appointments at short notice to access travel advice and travel vaccines if you have to go on international assignments: <http://www.institutfournier.org/consultations/centre-vaccinations/vaccinations> The alternative is: <https://www.pasteur.fr/fr/centre-medical/preparer-son-voyage> but the waiting list is longer.

- **For Marseille:** There are multiple vaccination centres in town, that you can usually access at short notice. This one is the most centrally located one: [Centre de vaccinations internationales de la Ville de Marseille | Ville de Marseille](#). You can make appointment with them using Doctolib.

7. Other personal Insurance

Please note: Information on health insurance is provided in Section 6 above.

7.1 Home, car and liability insurance

- Home insurance is compulsory and will be settled before your rental contract is signed.
- One option is to use a service such as papernest.com for all your contracts such as house insurance and electricity bills. It is really convenient!
- In some countries, liability insurance is advised (e.g. if a member of the public is injured while visiting your apartment), separately from home insurance. If applicable in your country, please provide information. This is not applicable in France

7.2 Travel insurance

Information about ECDC Travel Insurance:

ECDC travel insurance is provided by Cigna International Health Services. All staff and sponsored meeting delegates travelling on behalf of ECDC are covered by this insurance. The insurance takes effect from the time one leaves their home/office for the meeting/mission and ends upon return to home/office. Times outside this period, including durations with private deviations, are not covered.

Coverage includes, among others, medical expenses as well as costs for repatriation in case of personal accident and/or serious illness, theft, riots etc. For medical expenses, the travel insurance is a complimentary insurance. Any costs or damages that are not covered by the primary insurance (private, national or corporate) will be supplemented by the travel insurance upon a written declaration that such expense had not been covered.

Please note that the ECDC Travel Insurance is only a "top-up" insurance, and everyone is expected to have a travel insurance (professional or private) already. It is recommended to always bring your European Health Insurance Card when travelling in Europe. Source: ECDC EVA

In France...

- Travel insurance can be arranged through a separate insurer (AXA etc) or through your bank. I used Bunq bank for my travel insurance.

8. Working at training sites

8.1 Getting to & from the city/institute

8.1.1 Getting to the institute: Public transport links or shuttle

- **Costs:** Public transportation costs roughly another 100 euros per month. Training sites reimburse 50% of the cost of the monthly or annual transport card. Public transport is wonderful in France!
- **Shared bicycles:** You can also rent Velib (Paris)/Velov(Lyon)/levèlo (Marseille) bikes nearly everywhere in cities. You need to register first (and this can be done online!). Yearly fee is 100 eur(Paris)/30-50 e (Lyon) and you can choose between mechanical and electric bikes (only electric bikes in Marseille). The phone apps for these are very well made – each user gives a classification to the bike used, which allows you to check which bikes have had a good mark (three stars) or not (one to two stars) in the last hours or days. For SpF Paris if you decide to take Velib the nearest station is a 10-minute walk from the office.

8.1.2 How and where to buy tickets

- **HCL:** Once you get a French post address you can order a travel card (recent digital picture is needed). You can also go directly to the office of TCL to queue for this but then the picture has to be printed, I think.
- **Spf Marseille:** For the travel card, the process is the same as the HCL. However, in Marseille you can pay by card for all public transport (a one-way ticket is €1.70) because I usually cycled or walked, I used this option when taking the bus/tram/metro).

8.2 General orientation/onboarding

- **HCL:** No formal onboarding is in place for EUPHEM fellows. You should ask for normal new employee trainings (fire safety, hygiene, security) but usually these have not been provided for EUPHEM fellows. Might be a good way to start your fellowship!
- **SpF Marseille:** There is also no formal onboarding in place for new EPIET fellows. However, during my first week, my supervisor arranged multiple meetings for me to get to know the training site.

8.3 Your office space

- **HCL:** You will be designated an office space with desk. Getting the key to lock the door might be trickier.
- **SpF Paris:** You will be designated an office space with desk.
- **SpF Marseille:** You will have designated office space with a desk as well (and with sea view :D)

8.4 Institute / department access card

- **HCL:** You'll receive your ID card from HR services. Activation of this for access right and payments in canteen can take some time (up to 1 month).
- **SpF Paris:** You'll receive your ID card from HR services the first day of work.
- **SpF Marseille:** You will don't really have an ID card; you will get a blue electronic key from the administrative assistant the first day that allows you access into the building and the elevator to go to your office. You will also get a white card that gives you access to the canteen and allows you to pay for your food at the canteen using this badge (you can charge it at the canteen).

8.5 Laptop and mobile

- **HCL:** You'll receive a laptop. Probably you can ask for telephone if needed.
- **SpF Paris:** You'll receive a laptop.
- **SpF Marseille:** You will also receive a laptop on your first day and you have a desktop phone

8.6 Remote Access

- **SpF Paris:** You may negotiate up to three work-from-home days per week with your supervisor, but usually only one day per week is allowed in the first year unless special requests are made. You have 15 flexible work-from-home days per year, but still, you must be present in the office at least two days a week. When working remotely, you have to use VPN.
- **HCL:** After 6 months you can officially to WFH but only 1 day a week.
- **SpF Marseille:** You can work from home one day per week from the beginning of your contract. This day has to be the same every week and you need to align this with your supervisor and the administrative assistant. If you don't want to work from home one set day per week, you can decide to use the 15 flexible work-from-home days per year, but this also has to be registered with the administrative assistant, and you cannot do both. You need to use a VPN when working from home.

8.7 Vacation days

You have 25 holiday days per year. However, if you decide to work 38.5 hours per week (35 hours are the expected working hours) you have an additional 20 days of holiday. In Marseille, you are expected to work 38.5 hours per week, so you atomically have 45 holidays per year. You also get extra holidays as compensation for when you are travelling (for EPIET/EUPHEM modules and/or outbreak investigations in the field).

- **SpF Paris and Marseille:** holidays must be validated by the head of unit.
- **HCL:** Agree on process with your supervisor.

8.7.1 Public Holidays

- Check public holidays (jours fériés) in France : from <https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2405?lang=en>

8.8 The typical working day

- **HCL:** Open all day and weekend. 39 hours expected.
- **SpF Marseille:** Open all week and not on the weekend. 38.5 hours per week expected. Days usually start around 09h-09.30 and end at around 17h-18h.

8.9 Meals and breaks

- **HCL:** Lunch (usually 40-55 minutes around 12 to 13) is typically taken on site at Hospital canteen (self). You can pay the lunch with your ID card (redacted from your salary). The prices are very affordable (4-7 e, 2023).
- **SpF Marseille:** (usually 45 minutes to an hour, around 12 to 13h) is typically taken at a canteen that is shared between SpF and other civil organizations. It takes about 5 to 10 minutes to walk there from the training site. You can pay for the lunch with your white card (you also need this card to enter the building the canteen is in). The prices vary depending on how much and what you eat, but in generally affordable (5-12 euros, 2025). For every day you work from home, you are also reimbursed 9 euros on your “tickets restaurant” card (you will receive this card during your first month at SpF Marseille).
- **SpF Paris:** Lunch (usually 40-55 minutes around 12 to 13) is typically taken on site at SpF canteen. You can pay the lunch with your ID card. The prices are very affordable (4-7 euros, 2023). For each day you work from home you are reimbursed about 9 euro for the cost of lunch

9 Living in France

9.1 Getting around

9.1.1 Airport transfers

- **HCL:** Metro (A-line) to Vaulx-en-Velin - La Soie (terminus) and tram (RhoneExpress) to the LYS airport is the recommended way to reach Lyon airport (1 hour, 17-20€) . For flights check also Geneva (GVA) – bus from Perrache takes around 2 hours (10-18€) to GVA airport and can be time and cost-effective option for LYS airport.
- **Marseille:** Airport bus (Bus A1 from Gare St. Charles to Marseille Provence Airport) is basically to only public transport option available between the city centre and the airport (30 minutes to 1hr depending on the traffic, €10 euro one-way, €16 euro for a return ticket if you buy a paper ticket in the station).

9.1.2 Public transport

- See section 8.

9.1.3 Walking and cycling

- Helmet is not compulsory while cycling and travelling by bike or foot is common.
- **HCL:** Cycling in Lyon is great lots of bikable lanes and city bikes.
- **Marseille:** Cycling in Marseille is a mixed bag, there are areas with really good, separated bike lanes and there are also areas where you share the road with cars and buses.

9.1.4. Driving license and other considerations

If you move to another EU country, you don't usually have to exchange your driving license for a local one. However, you can voluntarily exchange it for an equivalent one in your new country of residence if you wish.

Source: [Driving license exchange and recognition in the EU - Your Europe \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/european-council/en/driving-license-exchange-and-recognition-in-the-eu)

9.2 Language schools

Language courses are reimbursed up to a maximum total of EUR 1 500. ECDC recommends that a budget of €750.00 is apportioned during the 1st specific grant agreement (SGA) and €750.00 during the 2nd SGA (01 March 2022 – 28 February 2023).

- There are a lot of institutes providing French classes:

- Alliance Francaise <http://www.alliancefr.org/>
 - Langue Onze Paris <http://www.langueonzeparis.com/>
 - Progressio <https://www.progressio.com/cours-de-francais-langue-etrangere>
 - Ecole municipale: <http://www.cours-municipal-d-adultes-cma.cma-paris.org/>
 - CIUP: <http://www.ciup.fr/en/>
 - And also, many online courses and tutoring options: <https://www.italki.com/> , [superprof.fr](https://www.superprof.fr), [preply.com](https://www.preply.com)
- **SpF Paris:** If you want to do intensive courses (half-day courses for one or two weeks) during the first months, you can do them during working hours.
 - **IP:** Ask for PPU French classes. These classes used to be given at Institute Pasteur (twice per week à 75 minutes) in the evenings. I highly recommend attending them, as it is a good possibility to practice your French and to get to know other foreign researchers at Institute Pasteur for common learning progress.
 - **HCL:** Alliance Francaise in Guillotiere has been used by fellows previously. It is not the cheapest (170-190e per month for 4 hours of classes per week) but has a good reputation. Placement test can be made online, and you can buy the book from their office. If you choose other options, please check with your contact person whether it is suitable for reimbursement.
 - **Marseille:** Aix-Marseille Université offers language classes twice per year for a semester. You need to go there to register and if you want to start in September, it is advised to go there already during the summer to get a spot. The courses are about 400-500 euros per semester. There are a number of other organizations that offer French classes in Marseille, but most classes are held on-site during the day which may not be practical with work. Both Alliance Française and Atout Langues Sud (Cours langue étrangère & Certifications : Atout Langues Sud) offer courses ranging from beginners to advance after working hours. For Atout Langues Sud, the courses are 1.5hrs long and you can reserve for once or twice a week.

9.3 Recreational activities, sports, worth visiting, meeting people

Paris is a very lively place, and you can find all sort of music every evening, and often for free. You can have a look at what is on at theses web site:

- <https://www.lylo.fr/>
- <https://www.paris.fr/quefaire>

It is worthwhile to go to these events; it is a part of the French experience!

Gyms may be very expensive in France, but you can try the municipal sport centres, a bit cheaper, and pretty good for the money you pay. Swimming pools are often in these municipal sport centres, also the Olympic ones. See this web site for info in Paris: <https://www.paris.fr/sport>

In SPF (all sites) you will have an account at Adages approximately 2-3 months after starting your contract. Adages may cover some of your activities such as sports and concerts. The demands are made in November of each year. At the SpF you can sign up for courses of yoga, pilates, salsa, capoeira, and more. Generally, they run once a week. There are also running groups, you just need to ask around in the office. SpF does not offer any discount for any gym.

SpF (all sites) offers tickets for UCG cinemas at low cost, but you have to apply for them at the beginning of the year, basically as you as you get there.

IP: Institut Pasteur offers sports classes (e.g. Yoga, Pilates etc.) during lunch breaks or in the evenings for money. Early registration is recommended. However, it also has a cooperation with the Fitness Studio chain "Cercle de la Form" which has many studios all over Paris. One is just 10minutes walking from Institut Pasteur. As IP staff you profit from a good discount. If you pay by year, you save money. You can pay the entire amount in three or four rates by cheque also, if you do not want to spend that much money at once.

For restaurants, while there are many opportunities, they are generally very expensive. But you can easily have great food while visiting their markets. You can't miss the wonderful food markets you find basically anywhere: <https://www.paris.fr/equipements/marches-alimentaires/tous-les-horaires>

Lyon: I suggest joining the expat groups in Facebook and following the epi.lyon weekly newsletter (epilyon.com) to know what is happening. With your payslip you get a monthly bulletin listing HCL activities and culture benefits available for the personnel.

Marseille: Marseille has a lot to offer cultural wise. If you have Instagram, there are groups like "culturel_marseille", "marseillezigzag", "cachotteries_marseille", "marseille.creative", "le_bonbon_marseille" and "marseille_secrete" you can follow to see what's happening in the city each week in terms of cultural events but also new restaurants, sport events and films. For sports, it depends on what you are into, there are of course a lot of water-based activities you can try such as sailing (there are multiple sailing schools in the Vieux-Porte). There's also Marseille Good Waves, which organizes sport activities every Saturday morning at Plage de Catalans including swimming and sometimes surfing. But also, a lot of yoga and

pilates studios throughout town (a lot of them are accessible through Classpass). There are also multiple running groups in the city such as sunsetgirls, Runclub, Larunniguerie, Sprezzaclub and Foodrunningclub (you can find most running clubs through Instagram). SpF Marseille does not offer sport classes at the training site. But there's also a gym just around the corner that some people go to during their lunch breaks.

9.4 Supermarkets

Carrefour, Casino, Monoprix and Franprix markets are nearly everywhere. Carrefour has bigger and smaller markets (Carrefour City). In the bigger Carrefour markets, you can find everything (dishes, pans, cutlery, pens, food, cards, etc.). Monoprix is generally considered the most expensive.

You can't miss the wonderful food markets you find basically anywhere:

<https://www.paris.fr/equipements/marches-alimentaires/tous-les-horaires>

9.5 Cultural insights

Always be polite! – it is very important in France. Interestingly people do not give tips in cafés and restaurants. I guess it is, as life in Paris is expensive enough. IP offers lots of activities (e.g. theatre group, orchestra, bands, sports, DVD and CD as well as book library etc.).

French people want to have good and also healthy food, which is a great attribute and led for sure to the good quality of the canteens at training sites. In your free time you can explore the many museums, cafés, theatres and sights of Paris. If you want to escape for a weekend, you are also very well connected to other major cities in France or neighbouring countries.

10 Moving with a family

Eligible moving costs include removal of household goods and transportation costs for the fellow and family members from any place within the EU/EEA to the place of employment and from place of employment to any place within EU/EEA, at the beginning and end of the fellowship respectively. Due to the implementation of the simplified cost options process under the FPA signed from 2022 onwards, between ECDC and the partners, there will be two systems in parallel. It is the responsibility of both the training site and the fellow to understand which system will apply

10.1 Social benefits for expectant parents and families:

In the event of pregnancy and birth or adoption, fellows are entitled to maternity or paternity leave according to the rules of the employer and within the duration of the framework partnership agreement (FPA) signed with ECDC. The training period may be extended in order to ensure the minimum length of 23 months to be eligible for the diploma. During the above-mentioned leave period, the fellow is entitled to the benefits as foreseen in his/her employment contract. ECDC may cover salaries during this period only if these costs are not covered by the social security system and provided that a specific grant agreement (SGA) is in place. Fellows must notify the training site supervisor and confirm their communicated return date to the Head of Fellowship Programme and FFO in accordance with the national law, but at least 30 days in advance.

11 CONTACTS

11.1 Key contacts at IP

- Administration: Isabelle Caillaux (ECDC administrative coordinator at IP)
- Human Resources: Hélène Mantz, Charlène Ngalu Nsona

11.2 Key contacts at SpF, Marseille

- Administration: Isabelle Mertens-Rondelart (administrative assistant for the team), Isabelle.Mertens-Rondelart@santepubliquefrance.fr, Tel. +33 (0)4 13 55 83 43
- Reimbursements for moving costs/language classes: Anne-Laure Mereau, Anne-Laure.Mereau@santepubliquefrance.fr, Tel: +33 (0)1 41 79 60 91
- SpF (I think for all sites) ICT hotline: +33 141 79 69 00

11.3 Key contacts at HCL

- Coordinator for your onboarding: Anne Suel, anne.suel@chu-lyon.fr
- Human Resources: You will get the contact information by visiting them or from Anne
- Finance: Ask HR.
- IT: Use electronic ticketing. But they will call you on your French phone number.

12.2 Contact information of current and previous fellows

We actively encourage you to contact fellows that are currently located at your host site. They have lots of current and additional information that they are happy to share with you.

Name	EPIET or EUPHEM	Cohort	Email	Nationality, moved from → to	Moved with partner/family
Yasemin Inaç	EPIET	C2024	yasemin.inac.1995@gmail.com	Dutch, moved from Brussels to Marseille	Alone, with a cat
Sara Mazzilli	EPIET	C2023	sara.mazzill@gmail.com	Italian, moved from Italy to Paris	Alone
Kaisa Jaakkola	EUPHEM	C2023	kaisa.jaakkola@fimnet.com	Finland, moved from Helsinki to Lyon	Alone
Catarina Krug	EPIET	C2021	denoronhakrug@hotmail.com	Portuguese, moved from UK to Paris	With partner
Giuseppina Ortu	EPIET	C2019	Giuseppina_ortu@outlook.com	Italian, moved from UK to Paris	Alone
Hilde Angermeier	EUPHEM	C2018	hilde.angermeier@yahoo.de	German, moved from Berlin to Paris	Alone
Amrish Baidjoe	EUPHEM	C2015	amrish.baidjoe@gmail.com	Dutch, moved from Netherlands to Paris	
Theocharopoulos Georgios	EPIET	C2014	theocharopoulos1@yahoo.com	Paris	
Laure Fonteneau	EPIET	C2013	laure.fonteneau@wanadoo.fr	Paris	
Anoek Backx		C2015	anoek.backx@gmail.com	Marseille	
Sabine Vygen	EPIET	C2012	s.vygen@yahoo.de	Bordeaux	
Teija Korhonen	EPIET	C2011	lempi9@hotmail.com	Marseille	