THINGS TO KNOW

LA ROCHELLE IS THE CAPITAL (PREFECTURE) OF THE CHARENTE-MARITIME DÉPARTEMENT, one of 12 départements in the greater Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region

LA ROCHELLE URBAN COMMUNITY
175,000 residents

CITY OF LA ROCHELLE
77,000 residents

15,000 STUDENTS
1st MARINA ON THE ATLANTIC COAST, ONE OF THE SUNNIEST TOWNS IN FRANCE

NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE REGION, 6th FRENCH REGION in terms of hosting foreign students (more than 25,000 international students)

La Rochelle Université:
9,500 students including
13% foreign students of 90 different nationalities,
11 research laboratories, 1 multidisciplinary doctoral school, 220 doctoral students including 40% international students

LA ROCHELLE IS WELL-RANKED AMONG 44 FRENCH UNIVERSITY CITIES WHERE IT’S GOOD TO LIVE AND STUDY, WITH AN EXCELLENT NOTE FOR ITS ATTRACTIVENESS (awarded by L’Étudiant Magazine)

Most of the information presented in the Campus France City Information Sheets concerns all international students regardless of their institution.

In France, in each of the host cities, most foreign students study at universities. Accordingly, the City Information Sheets attach great importance to them without overlooking the other higher education institutions even if it is not possible to list them all here with their specific information.

For more information on the institutions’ welcomes and orientations:
https://www.campusfrance.org/fr/recherche/categorie/nouvelle-aquitaine-554

CAMPUS FRANCE
28 rue de la Grange aux Belles, 75010 PARIS - 01 40 40 58 58 - www.campusfrance.org
Welcome for students enrolled at La Rochelle Université

At La Rochelle Université, a small university, your main point of contact is the Direction Des Relations Internationales, the International Relations Department (DRI) which will help you complete essential administrative procedures. A personalized welcome service has been set up for all international students with a support team of mentors to help them find accommodation, complete their enrollment and obtain residence permits.

Address: La Rochelle Université, International Relations Department (DRI), Technoforum building, ground-floor, 23 avenue Albert Einstein, 17000 La Rochelle.

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:45am to 12:30pm and 1pm to 4:45pm (except Wednesday afternoons).

Contact: 05 46 45 87 47 or drijuniv-lr.fr

Learn more:
- check the University web pages for international students, whether exchange students or free-movers (regular admission): https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > International > Venir étudier à l’université.
- download the Student Guide, which has comprehensive information on a wide range of subjects https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > International > Venir étudier à l’université.
- check the University web pages for international students, whether exchange students or free-movers (regular admission): https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > International > Venir étudier à l’université.
- download the Student Guide, which has comprehensive information on a wide range of subjects https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > International > Venir étudier à l’université.

Buddy System
ADRIEM Association. Meet with local families and spend time together.

Contact: ADRIEM (Association pour le Développement des Relations Internationales avec les Etudiants du Monde), 07 82 83 14 32 or adriem17000@gmail.com
Site: https://www.aggio-larochelle.fr/-rils-accueillent-les-etudiants-du-monde

Welcome and orientation in other institutions
If you are enrolled in another institution, please consult the Campus France website for orientation.
The site presents a series of Information Sheets covering the different higher learning institutions: https://www.campusfrance.org > Students > Documentary resources > Practical information for students and researchers > Reception arrangements in institutions
If you cannot find your school in this list, then go directly to their website.

National Services
- students: www.etudiant.gouv.fr
- doctoral students, researchers: http://www.euraxess.fr/fr

ACCOMMODATION

Finding somewhere to live is not always easy. Rents are often high, and landlords require financial guarantees (such as a deposit). Nevertheless, there is a wide range of accommodation on offer: halls of residence that are exclusively reserved for students and managed by the CROUS, student halls and private lodgings, rooms in private homes, flatshares...
The main thing is to start preparing for this as early as possible, before leaving your home country.

To find out more:
- The Student Guide published by the University (see above) provides a number of tips and addresses.
You can also check out the accommodation pages on the University website: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Vie pratique > Logement étudiant.
- The Association Rochelaise d’Hébergement Pour les étudiants et les Jeunes (ARHPJE), formerly known as ARPAE, is an association for student and youth housing. Working in partnership with the City of La Rochelle and La Rochelle Université, it manages over 640 units: https://arhpje.fr/
- The Comité Local pour le Logement Autonome des Jeunes (CLLAJ), a local committee for youth housing, publishes classified ads on its site for housing: https://cllaj71.fr/
- The La Rochelle CDIJ (Centre Départemental d’Information Jeunesse), the youth information center, gives advice on its site as well as a housing guide (Guide Logement) published by the Nouvelle-Aquitaine CRIJL. Download here: http://www.infojeunesse17.com > Vie pratique > Le logement.

A FEW TIPS

Short-term housing:
- La Rochelle youth hostel, at the Minimes marina. Address and phone number: avenue des Minimes, 17000 La Rochelle, 05 46 44 43 11. Website: https://www.aj-larochelle.fr/hostel/ or by telephone on +33 (0)5 46 44 43 11
- For any other types of temporary accommodation, please use the search engine on the Tourist Office website: https://www.larochelle-tourisme.com > Séjourner > Hébergements.

Long-term housing:
- CROUS student housing, the La Rochelle CROUS manages over 640 units: http://www.euraxess.fr/fr
- For ride-sharing, refer to the collaborative websites:
  - national site: https://www.blablacar.fr/
  - There is also a site managed by the CROUS, Lokaviz, which includes a listing of student accommodation in private homes: https://www.lokaviz.fr/
  - Le Cédic, the Rue des Minimes, 17000 La Rochelle. Hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 12pm and 1pm to 5:40pm.
  - Contact: 05 46 44 43 11

Private Housing Platforms
Other offers for student lodging, managed by private institutions, are also available in La Rochelle. Try these sites:
- https://www.estrudies.com
- https://www.appartcity.com
- https://www.adele.org
- https://www.immojeune.com
- https://housingsanywhere.com
- Contact: 05 46 41 16 36 or cdij17@yahoo.fr

Hours: Monday to Friday, 1pm to 6pm.

Address: Ecole Dor, 24 rue Saint Jean du Pérot (in the courtyard on the right), 17000 La Rochelle.

For ride-sharing, refer to the collaborative websites:
- national site: https://www.blablacar.fr/

If you need a guarantor to secure your lodging Visale is a new and free guarantor system: www.visale.fr

If you want to make an application for public housing funding (the APL “Aide Personnalisée Younger”): http://www.euraxess.fr/fr

Getting around in La Rochelle

If travelling to La Rochelle from Paris, take the train (around 3 hours by TGV - the high-speed train): https://www.oui.sncf

For travelling in and around the town you can use public transport (buses and sea-buses!) run by the Yélo network which manages transport in and around La Rochelle: https://www.yelo-aggl-agglarochele.fr (special rates for students aged under 26 and a single travel-card for all types of transport).

There are Nouvelle-Aquitaine regional trains for getting around the region: https://www.ter.sncf.com/nouvelle-aquitaine or https://transports.nouvelle-aquitaine.fr Buses are also an option for low-cost travel: https://fr.oibus.com/ or https://www.foxbus.fr/

For ride-sharing, refer to the collaborative websites:
- national site: https://www.blablacar.fr/

For a bit more independence, you can rent a bike from Yélo which also runs a self-service bike system: https://www.yelo-aggl-larochelle.fr > Vélo.

YOUR ARRIVAL IN LA ROCHELLE /
ENROLLMENT IN YOUR INSTITUTION

CVEC
Before you can enroll in your institution, you must download proof of payment of the Contribution Vie Etudiante and Campus (CVEC)
- Connect to: https://cvec.etudiant.gouv.fr/
- For additional information and special cases: https://www.campusfrance.org > Getting Organized > CVEC.
- Confirm Registration
Take note! Even if you have a pre-registration letter, you are not officially enrolled. You must confirm your enrollment with the institution’s Service de la Scolarité (Admissions) as soon as you arrive.

Scolarité (Admissions) as soon as you arrive.

Take note! Even if you have a pre-registration letter, you must validate it online as soon as you arrive in France, on the ANEF (Administration numérique pour les Etrangers en France - Digital Administration for Foreigners in France) website. This validation must be carried out within the three months following your arrival: https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/#/
- If you have Algerian citizenship or you are a student holding a “concours” visa or a visa bearing the mention “carte à solliciter dans les deux mois” (card to be requested within two months): your request for a residence permit must be carried out at the Préfecture.
- If you hold a “mineur scolarisé” (“minor in education”) visa and you have since attained your majority, you must request a residence permit directly on the ANEF website or at the préfecture of your place of residence within the two months following your attaining the age of legal majority: https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/#/

Please note: if you wish to renew your residence permit or VLS-TS, you must make your request during the third month preceding the date of end of validity of your current residence permit, on the following website: https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/#/

First Things First / Enrolment in your institution

RESIDENCE PERMITS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
- If you have just arrived in France on a long-term VLS-TS student visa: you must validate it online as soon as you arrive in France, on the ANEF (Administration numérique pour les Etrangers en France - Digital Administration for Foreigners in France) website. This validation must be carried out within the three months following your arrival: https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/#/
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Please note: if you wish to renew your residence permit or VLS-TS, you must make your request during the third month preceding the date of end of validity of your current residence permit, on the following website: https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/particuliers/#/

Please refer to the following tutorial for help with this procedure: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iGha_yqN04

PRACTICAL INFORMATION /

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT
If you stay in France for more than 3 months, it will be much easier day-to-day if you open a bank account, online or in one of the bank agencies located in La Rochelle.
In France, opening a bank account is a right: https://www.service-public.fr > Argent > Comptes bancaires (droit au compte).

ACCESSING HEALTHCARE
Accessing healthcare in France is almost free, but you must be insured. You must therefore be registered with the national health insurance programme.

Please go to the https://etudiant-etranger.ameli.fr website to register, understand your rights and to carry out the requisite procedures.

Learn more: https://www.campusfrance.org > Getting Organized > Health
As a student, you can also take advantage of the university medical services. In these health centers where consultations are free, you will be greeted by a team of doctors and nurses who can give personalized advice about health and prevention.

That’s the case in La Rochelle with the Service de Santé Universitaire, the university health center: https://www.campusfrance.org > Vie étudiante > Le service social et de santé.
Address: Service de Santé Universitaire (SDSU), 42-44 avenue Albert Einstein, 17000 La Rochelle.
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm.
Contact: 05 46 45 84 46.

Students enrolled at any other establishment should contact the Service de la Vie étudiante at their place of study.

TAKING OUT COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH INSURANCE (“MUTUELLE”)
We recommend you take out complementary health insurance in order to cover the totality of your healthcare costs, which are not all covered by the compulsory and free national health insurance programme.
Please note: options and levels of insurance vary from one insurer to another. In order to choose the complementary insurance that is best adapted to your situation and your budget, you can access more information on a student “mutuelles” price comparison website.

HOUSING INSURANCE
In France, housing insurance is mandatory. You can sign up for housing insurance called “garantie risques locatifs” - rental risk guarantee - at your bank or a private insurance company. Online subscription is often possible.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS
SAMU: Call 15 Emergency Medical Services
Police emergency: Call 17 in the event of violence, theft, robbery.
Fire Department: Call 18 in the event of fire, gas leak, water damage, natural catastrophe, or traffic accident.
Call 112: European emergency services number that’s accessible from anywhere in the European Union in addition to the French numbers above.

LEARNING FRENCH
Learning French is an opportunity that’s not to be missed! Find what works best for you:
- by consulting the Campus France site or the Français Langue Etrangère (FLE) - French as a foreign language - centers and universities which offer courses at all levels year-round http://ecolesdetf-campusfrance.org
- by asking in your institution, at city hall, or in your host city’s Maison des Associations - community centers.

FINDING A JOB OR AN INTERNSHIP

It is important that you have sufficient financial resources to come and study in France.

Working in France as a foreign student is possible within limits, namely for a maximum duration of 964 hours per year. This can therefore only be a way of earning supplementary funds.
Please note: to work in France, if you are not a citizen of the European Union, you must hold a valid student residence permit.

To help you find a job or work experience placement, useful websites:
- The La Rochelle CDIJ (Centre Départemental
**THINGS TO DO IN LA ROCHELLE /**

**BE ACTIVE**
Attend cultural and sporting events, or join a social or community group, through one of the numerous local or national student clubs and associations. To learn more, check with your school (Service de la vie étudiante, Student Services) or visit the following sites: www.animafac.net or www.letudiant.fr

At La Rochelle Université, the Maison de l’Étudiant has opened a space called Le Salon, where the AFEV network of student volunteers organizes inter-association cafes, debates and other participatory events: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Initiatives étudiantes et en engagement.

**CULTURE AND NIGHTLIFE**
Movie theaters, concerts, theaters, museums, exhibitions, and festivals are on the program and most of the time, at reduced cost for students: https://www.larochelle.fr > Action municipale > Ville culturelle.

At La Rochelle Université the Maison de l’Etudiant, houses the university cultural service. It promotes culture by organizing multiple disciplines, activities, and outings: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Culture.

La Rochelle Université is part of the Art + University + Culture network, the national network for cultural action in higher learning institutions.

The University offers a free Pass’Culture students with a choice of over 200 shows, concerts and exhibitions in 20 partner cultural venues: https://www.univ-larochelle.fr > Vie étudiante > Culture > Pass’culture.

For entertainment or to pick up some culture, you can choose from:
- 4 multi-screen movie theaters (student rates, rewards card), including an arthouse movie theater, CGR Olympia, and La Coursive eclectic programming.
- 4 major municipal museums, including a science museum, the Natural History Museum, which houses archaeological, ethnographical and geological collections: https://museum.larochelle.fr/ Admission to La Rochelle’s museums is free on the first Sunday of the month (except in July and August).
- 1 international space for artistic residency, the Centre Intermondes; a venue for exhibitions and exchange, dedicated to all different forms of artistic creation: http://centre-intermondes.com/
- some ten concert and theater venues, including La Coursive, which is an important national stage in France: https://www.la-coursive.com/

- some dozen bookshops, including two independent bookshops, Les Saisons and Les Rebelles Ordinaires.
- a network of 5 multimedia libraries in and around La Rochelle: http://bibliotheques.agglo-larochelle.fr

In La Rochelle, for going out or staying abreast of events, read the leading regional daily paper, Sud-Ouest, available in news stands or on the Internet: https://www.sudouest.fr/

You can also consult:

**TOP ATTRACTIONS /**

- The Vieux Port, with its two medieval towers, the Tour de la Chaîne and Tour St-Nicolas.
- The Tour de la Lanterne, dating back to the late 12th century, the last medieval lighthouse on the Atlantic coast.
- The Porte de la Grosse-Horloge, port-side gateway to the town.
- The old town, with its arcade-lined streets, Rue des Merciers and Rue du Palais in particular, around the Hôtel de Ville.
- The Musée des Beaux-arts, with its classic and contemporary collections.
- La Rochelle Aquarium in the town center, facing the Vieux-Port, one of Europe’s largest private aquariums.
- Parc Charruyer, the city’s green lung located between the town center and the ocean.
- Beaches, such as Plage de la Concurrence on the edge of town, the large Plage des Minimes and nearby Châtelaillon-Plage, a unspoiled seaside resort with a fine sandy beach and “Belle époque” architecture.
- Île de Ré, accessible by bridge from La Rochelle, with its white houses and hollyhocks, a paradise for cyclists!

For more information, consult the La Rochelle Tourist Office website: https://www.larochelle-tourisme.com/

To stay informed and attuned to others and the world, to share and dialogue with students, follow social media where Campus France has an especially strong presence!

Remember to sign up on the France Alumni network to take part in discussion groups on various subjects, take advantage of cultural outings, and consult job and internship offers.