

NOTE: The following information is provided by the students having participated in the Nice Exchange Program in 2013-2014. The Department of French Studies is not responsible for the accuracy and reliability of this information.

[A\) Banking arrangements](#)

[B\) Portable phones](#)

[C\) Housing](#)

A) Banking arrangements

BNP Paribas (<http://www.bnpparibas.com/>)

Respondent	Difficulties in setting up the account?	Would you recommend this bank?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?	Other advice about managing money in Nice?
Student 1	No. BNP was easy and straight forward	Yes	Some other banks offer better insurance deals.	Apply for CAF as soon as possible, as in September. Have the forms printed asap, you will get money from the date of the online application.
Student 2	No	Yes	n/a	Apply for CAF (online at least) as soon as your bank account is open. Get Vélo bleu
Student 3	Yes. Terrible amounts of paperwork and unnecessary specifications were needed.	No. If you have to use it, make sure to use the branch at the main square.	I would go to a different branch or a different bank.	Make sure you really have more than you need. Literally.
Student 4	It took forever to set up, but through talking with others that seemed normal.	Yes	n/a	Budget! Also wire money from Canada in lump sums as it can be expensive.
Student 5	No	Yes	n/a	Apply for CAF asap. And get Vélo bleu
Student 6	No	Yes	n/a	n/a
Student 7	Yes. So many. Took about 3 months to get an account. Unreliable.	No	n/a	Nice is expensive. Be prepared to pay a lot. Much different than Canada.
Student 8	Yes!	Yes	Honestly it's the luck of the draw. My friend had no issues with this bank but my roommates and I couldn't get it set up for almost two months.	Apply for CAF on the Internet before you do anything. You can get your papers in order afterwards. They date back your refund to the day you apply – not arrived.

BNP Paribas (cont.) (<http://www.bnpparibas.com/>)

Respondent	Difficulties in setting up the account?	Would you recommend this bank?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?	Other advice about managing money in Nice?
Student 9	Not initially; however, had to wait over two months for my debit card.	Yes	n/a	n/a
Student 10	No	Yes	n/a	BNP rebates around 60 euros for student bus passes and with their partnership with MEP, rebates around 20 euros for social insurance.
Student 11	Only difficulty was when I travelled to a different country and had hard time taking money out of ATMs.	Yes	I'm satisfied.	Apply for CAF. Learn to live without certain luxuries. Embrace what you have and find new favorite things. Don't buy drinks at bars and get a Vélo bleu pass, not a bus pass.
Student 12	Yes. It took two months to setup, terrible at communicating, charged extra fees that were vague and confusing.	No. Definitely not.	BNP on Rue de France, not Californie.	CAA Travel Euro MasterCard. Avoids bank charges and saves a lot of money.

Banque Populaire (<http://www.banquepopulaire.fr>)

Respondent	Difficulties in setting up the account?	Would you recommend this bank?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?	Other advice about managing money in Nice?
Student 13	Not at all! I dealt with an English banker and he made the process easy.	Yes	Basically, you have to accept that it will take longer in France for any information to be processed	Set up two accounts – a savings for rent and a chequing for your food and spending money. Just be organized and you'll be fine.
Student 14	Yes. I tried to set up savings account to manage savings but banker never did so spent more than intended.	Wasn't horrible – a lot of perks like free online banking.	Do everything in person at the teller; that way you can ensure things get done.	Vélo bleu is cool and bus pass is worth it. Create a savings account to put your rent money in so you don't accidentally spend it. Create CAF online profile asap. You'll get money from the French government sooner.
Student 15	We had an English agent, which helped tremendously.	Yes	n/a	Budget your rent money.

Société générale (<https://www.societegenerale.fr/>)

Respondent	Difficulties in setting up the account?	Would you recommend this bank?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?	Other advice about managing money in Nice?
Student 16	No	Yes	n/a	n/a
Student 17	Make your parents admins on your account before leaving. Get them to wire transfer your money to the account	Yes	n/a	Life is expensive in Nice; travelling is expensive. Do CAF asap if you want to get money back. Get Vélo bleu card right away. (25 euros for the year).
Student 18	They limit spending to 300 euros per month making it very difficult for travelling, etc. A 4 euros monthly fee we were not told about.	No	Go to a bank with 0 fees. One that doesn't limit spending.	Make a budget! You will run out of money if you don't.
Student 19	No, just takes a week or so to get your actual bank card.	Yes	n/a	If the exchange rate is good in September, transfer all your money right away. Saves you from those terrible transfer fees and exchange rates.
Student 20	I had to have a phone number for some parts, and needed an account to get a phone plan.	Yes	n/a	Use the saving account. Know how much you want to spend every month, and hoard the rest away.
Student 21	The people we dealt with were very nice and the process was easy.	Yes	n/a	Don't go to HSBC . They were not willing to take international students, but did not say this right away. Instead they just made every process difficult until we decided to use another bank.
Student 22	No	Yes	n/a	Beware of additional unforeseen expenses.

Caisse d'épargne (<https://www.caisse-epargne.fr>)

Respondent	Difficulties in setting up the account?	Would you recommend this bank?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?	Other advice about managing money in Nice?
Student 23	They are slow and disorganized	No	Would have gone with Société Générale	Move all funds over at beginning to avoid lots of transfer fees. Grocery shop at LIDL and Carrefour for cheapest groceries

B) Portable Phone

Respondent	Company	With <i>abonnement</i> ?	Cost	Was the expense worthwhile?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?
Student 1	Bouygues Telecom Store, B&You	No	20 € for unlimited 3G data	Yes	n/a
Student 2	B&You	No	20 € for unlimited 3G data	Yes	n/a
Student 3	B&You	Yes	5 € / month	Yes	n/a
Student 4	Orange	No	30 € + pay as you go	n/a	I probably would have unlocked my Canadian phone and used it instead of buying a French one
Student 5	Orange	Yes	30 € / month (unlimited talk and text in France, 3G)	Somewhat	n/a
Student 6	B&You	Yes	5 – 20 € plans. The card was about 5 €	Yes	Unlock your phone before you leave.
Student 7	Orange	No	10€	Yes, only because it's good to have it in case of emergencies etc.	If you are able to unlock your phone before arriving, it's an easier process. Most companies offer relatively inexpensive phone plans.

Portable phone (cont.)

Respondent	Company	With <i>abonnement</i> ?	Cost	Was the expense worthwhile?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?
Student 8	B&You	No	30€ for the phone. 1€/ month	Sure... I enjoy life without it but it can be helpful.	With Facebook and Skype and friends with phones I don't have a need for a phone.
Student 9	B&You Virgin	No	15.99 (B&You) 19.99 (Virgin)	My plan was great and gave me 3G data and unlimited calls to Canada included	Bring an unlocked iPhone and just set up an account / get a SIM card in France.
Student 10	B&You	No	19.99€ / month, unlimited calls and texts in France, 3G data, 4G and international calling	Yes	B&You has good service. Buy at Boygues (SIM) and activate online. Most phone companies offer the same "sans engagement" deal for same price
Student 11	Boygues (with my own unlocked iPhone)	Yes	19€ / month	Yes, having data all over France was a huge help for getting lost.	n/a
Student 12	B&You	No	19.99 € / month, unlimited text, 3G free outgoing calls home to Canada	Yes	n/a
Student 13	B&You (unlocked iPhone)	No	20 € / month for unlimited everything	n/a	n/a
Student 14	B&You (unlocked iPhone)	No	2.99€ / month, unlimited texting + 3 hours calling, no data	Yes	n/a
Student 15	B&You	No	20€ / month, 3Gb data, unlimited texts and calls	Yes	n/a

Portable phone (cont.)

Respondent	Company	With <i>abonnement</i> ?	Cost	Was the expense worthwhile?	If you were not satisfied, how would you do things differently?
Student 16	Virgin	No	20€ / month, 3Gb data, unlimited texts and calls	Certainly. I use it all the time. Google maps is a must	It took a month to actually get set up because my original SFR card got lost in the mail. Just go to a store.
Student 17	Virgin	No	19.99 € (Happy Family Plan with my roommates) + 9.99 € (unlimited calls) + 9.99 € (3G data)	I think so, I was able to always message home through the 3 gigs of data	I was satisfied
Student 18	Virgin	Yes	13€ / month for unlimited international calling and 3Gb of data	Yes	n/a
Student 19	B&You	No	20€ / month, 3Gb data, unlimited texts and calls	Yes	n/a

C) Housing

Address	Type of accommodation	Cost / person	Rented through an agency?	Business relationship with the owner	Recommend?
14 rue Andrioli	apartment	470 € / month	Yes. "A Friend in Nice" I would recommend it.	The owner was helpful but a bit difficult to get in contact with as she lived in Norway.	Yes, amazing location and good price
37 Avenue de la Bornala	Private residence (Studio apartments but only students can live here)	582 € / month + electricity	No	n/a	For sure. Only 8 minutes walk to school and you meet a lot of students.

Housing (cont.)

Address	Type of accommodation	Cost / person	Rented through an agency?	Business relationship with the owner	Recommend?
74B Avenue de Californie	studio apartment	750 € / month	No	Everything was fine. No problems	I would, if they were willing to spend it. It's a nice little place, but I wish sometimes that I had roommates.
148 Avenue de la Californie	apartment	463 € / month	No	He lives in Ireland so he was never available and did nothing to help us.	No. Nice place, but the landlord was not helpful.
148 Avenue de Californie	apartment (2 bedrooms)	550 € / month	No	Non-existent. Communicated via email and a friend living in the building.	Absolutely. Very safe apartment building, less than 18 minutes away from university. plenty of grocery stores, bakeries, etc. around the apartment.
148 Avenue de la Californie	apartment	463 € / month	No	Horrible...	Gorgeous view or the ocean. I would recommend it, but just be prepared for maintenance complication and rent difficulties.
148 Avenue de Californie	suite	475 € / month	No	Easy going	Yes
148 Avenue de la Californie	apartment	500 € / month (450 + utilities)	No	Never met him, difficult for business due to being out of the country, but very laid back and easy to get along with.	Yes. Decent apartment but too small for three people. Make sure you get along well.
148 Avenue de la Californie	apartment (2 bedrooms)	550 € / month	No	Great, only communication through email, very good.	Yes. Big, comfortable. 10 minutes walk to school. Far from downtown Nice.
101 bis Boulevard Gambetta	apartment (3 bedrooms)	500 / 475 / 475 € / month	No. Landlord found on appartager.com	He was a good landlord, but he was a little passive aggressive. Complicated relationship, but overall well.	Yes. The landlord fixed things right away and at least he lives in Nice. Central location, near several modes of transportation, safe.

Housing (cont.)

Address	Type of accommodation	Cost / person	Rented through an agency?	Business relationship with the owner	Recommend?
1 Avenue du Général Weygand	apartment (3 bedrooms, shared by 4 persons)	295 – 350 € / month	No	No issues, problems solved right away.	Yes. Cheapest rent. (350 € / month if rooming alone; 295 € / month if sharing with another person)
7 Avenue du Général Weygand	apartment	350 € / month	No	Good, very nice, easy to contact	Yes
1 rue Guillaume Apollinaire	apartment (3 bedrooms)	630 € / month	No. Private arrangements with the landlord found through apartager.fr	She was helpful and got things done... eventually.	Yes. It was probably the most expensive, but ours was a newly renovated flat and was in a great location.
65 Rue Gioffredo	studio apartment	700 € / month including internet and utilities	No	n/a	Yes, if you want to be downtown and live alone, however there was no oven or laundry.
17 Rue Saint Philippe	apartment (3 bedrooms)	550 € / person, all inclusive	Rented through “A Friend in Nice”. I wouldn’t really recommend this agency; they charge a decent fee. Can find other better accommodation at lower price. Use http://www.appartager.com/	Good but not perfect. Apartment had a lot of problems. The owner was slow to fix our many issues with pipes, water, etc. We had a flood, few issues that eventually got fixed. Not the best. Tried to avoid confronting issues with the apartment.	No, it’s an old apartment and there was so much that went wrong, so inconvenient. Pipe broke, bad renovations, funky smelling pipe. Other people had better experiences. But amazing location.