



## **FIRST STEPS IN NANTES**

**International Relations Office  
Building A  
Main entrance of Centrale Nantes**

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44321 NANTES cedex  
France  
Tel : +33 (0) 2 40 37 15 18  
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**[international@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:international@ec-nantes.fr)**



Contact : [international@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:international@ec-nantes.fr)

Hello everyone, the future students of Centrale Nantes,

Are you ready to start your unique experience in France, a country known for baguette and saucisson? Soon, the city of Nantes, which is elected as the greenest European city for 2013, will no longer be a mystery for you. You'll quickly discover this is the city that you don't want to leave.

The school campus is 15 minutes away from the town center by tramway and 45 minutes from the Atlantic Ocean. Choosing this school is really your right choice. You can enjoy the campus life and, at the same time, you can spend a long day relaxing on the sunny beaches of La Baule.

Also, what awaits you is our school's 90 clubs and associations, from theatre to sailing boat, or taking part in the unforgettable Centrale events.

Just like you notice, a rich and colorful life is waiting for you.

Looking forward to meeting you in September!

## Visa

If your home country is listed below, please register yourself on the Campus France database to obtain your Visa <http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/b-agence/application01.htm>

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo Brazzaville, South Korea, Ivory Coast, U.S.A, Gabon, India, Japan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Senegal, Syria, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, Vietnam.

If you are not from one of the countries listed above, please contact the **French Consulate or Embassy** of your home country.

## Permit Stay card

If you come from a country that is not a member of the European Union, you will have to obtain a stay card). Centrale Nantes has a strong partnership with the Prefecture (official service which delivers the stay cards).

Please, at your arrival, give to the international office :

- Your filled OFII document –delivered with your Visa
- A copy of your passport and Visa with the stamp of entry in France
- A copy of your accommodation certificate in France (delivered by the residence itself)

The international relations office will send it for you to OFII. These documents must be sent in the 1<sup>st</sup> month of your arrival in France. A medical check will follow this procedure.



## The CAF (caisse d'allocations familiales) : [www.caf.fr](http://www.caf.fr)

The CAF is an organization of the French government which gives a financial support to all students living in France. You will receive a certain amount of money every month. The amount depends on several criteria: your own salary if you have a job, your rent amount, where you are living, whether or not you receive a grant. This amount of money is called “Aide Personnalisée au Logement”, more commonly A.P.L. The APL is directly transferred to the owner, so that you only have to support the initial rent minus the APL.

For the previous year, foreign students received an average of 100€ from the CAF and those who also had grants around about 150€.

Remember that we are there to help you to fill out your request form for APL and that you can only make this request after your arrival in France and once you have opened a bank account.

## Getting to Nantes

Nantes offers you the possibility to arrive by plane thanks to its international airport called Nantes Atlantique. From your home country, it may be similar price to land in Nantes or in Paris.

If you land at the airport of Paris-Charles de Gaulle, you can either take a correspondence flight to Nantes Airport, or you can take a direct TGV (train) to Nantes (about 3 hours travel).

The railway station (Gare TGV- in French) at this airport is called “Airport CDG2 TGV” or “Airport Paris Roissy Charles de Gaulle- Gare TGV”. This railway station is located in terminal 2 between Terminal 2E and 2D. If you land in terminal 2 you can get it by foot.

If you land in another terminal, 1 or 3, there is a free of charge Shuttle “Navette- in French” that can bring you to the Railway station. You must foresee about 1 h 30 between the landing of your flight and the departure of the train if you land in terminal 2 otherwise adds 30 minutes more.

If you land at Paris- Orly Airport you have to go to Paris Montparnasse railway station by taking Air-France Bus, then take a TGV (train) to Nantes (about 2 hours travel).

You can consult the train schedules or even book and pay your train ticket on <http://www.voyages-sncf.com>. You can also take your train ticket after your arrival to the railway station, in this case look for “Mainlines Tickets counters” (Guichets Billets Grandes Lignes- in French).

The TGV ticket from Paris to Nantes costs between (40 to 80 euros) in second class.

## Getting to Centrale Nantes

The beginning of the Master's courses will take place on September 4<sup>th</sup>, the 1<sup>st</sup> year of engineering will start on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> year of engineering will start on Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup>. You can show up in Nantes from September 2. If you can avoid it, make sure that you do not arrive at the Ecole Centrale on a Saturday or a Sunday. All the offices are shut and there will be nobody available to help you. If you do arrive on a weekend, you will have to find a hotel until Monday morning.

**Please inform us about the date and time of your arrival in Nantes and fill this online form to let us know when and where to pick you up :**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1dXQB6tUCP2mslw16G5fnU4386tJeYe7hmeVPwJaOoig/viewform>

The CENTRALE Nantes students association  
**ACCENTS**

Will help you for the airport or train station pick up

send an email to  
[accents@eleves.ec-nantes.fr](mailto:accents@eleves.ec-nantes.fr)



### If you arrive by train

- By taxi: about 20 minutes, it costs about 20 €
- By Tramway: From the North Exit of the station, take the tram line 1, direction F. Mitterrand. Get off after about 7 minutes at the stop "Commerce". Then Take the tram Line 2, direction Orvault Grand-Val, and get off at the stop "École Centrale / Audencia". The École Centrale is close to the tram stop. One ticket costs €1, 50. It is valid for one hour after you stamp it and can also be used on the regular buses and trams.

Most of the university residences are located some tram stops away from the École Centrale.

### If you arrive by plane

The Nantes International airport is situated about 10 km southwest of Nantes. Different possibilities can be considered to reach École Centrale de Nantes and the university residences:

There is a "Tan air" bus. You can use one of the following path after getting on it:

- Get off at "Neustrie station", the terminus of Tram 2 (ten minutes from the airport), then take tram 2 till direction Orvault Grand-Val, using the same ticket you paid in the bus, and get off at the stop "École Centrale / Audencia". The École Centrale is close to the tram stop. The "Tan Air" ticket costs in this case 1.5 €.

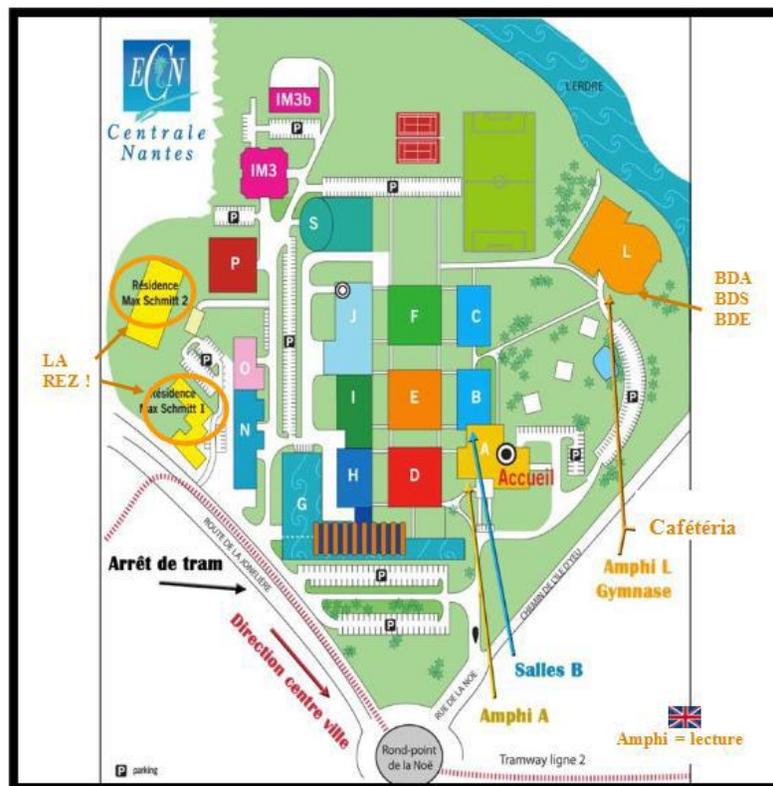
Contact : [international@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:international@ec-nantes.fr)

- Get off at the stop “place du commerce” (about 40 minutes). Take the tram Line 2, direction Orvault Grand-Val, and get off at the stop “École Centrale / Audencia”. The École Centrale is close to the tram stop. The “Tan Air” ticket costs 7€.

Other possibility by Taxi it will cost about €70 from Airport to École Centrale.

## When you arrive at École Centrale de Nantes

Go to the International Relations Office  
Building A, on the right of the main entrance.  
Map of the campus



## Registration at Centrale Nantes

The registration office (called « Scolarité », building A) delivers your student card in the first days you arrive as soon as you give them:

- two passport photos
- your insurance document
- Certified copies of your diploma
- Certified copies of your academic records of your home higher education background
- a copy of your passport and/or ID
- Certified copy of birth.

Most of the time, your registration at Centrale Nantes includes the registration to the Sécurité sociale française (General health insurance based on the French system)

Your contact at Scolarité is Nathalie YZIQUEL : [scolarite@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:scolarite@ec-nantes.fr)

Contact : [international@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:international@ec-nantes.fr)

## Insurances

Getting correctly insured in France is a tiring task for a foreigner. But do not panic, the DRI (international office) and the BDE are there to help you!

To sum it up you, will need three obligatory insurances:

### - Social Security (or in French *sécurité sociale*):

If you are European, you should be covered by the insurance that you have at home, but you need your European Health Insurance Card.

If you are not European, you have to sign up at the SMEBA OR at the LMDE at the beginning of the year to get this social security. This will be done at the same time when you will sign up at the Ecole Centrale at the administration office, as the cost is included in your registration fees (about €250).

### - The “responsabilité civile” :

This insurance covers accidental damage that you could have caused.

You should ask your current insurance if you are covered for an internship in a French company. If this is the case, everything is fine. If not, you have to take one in France. The SMEBA and the LMDE also propose you this insurance.

### - The “assurance logement” :

In France, it is obligatory to insure the apartment that you are renting by this insurance.

If you open a bank account at the BNP Paribas or BPO, our partner banks, you will get it for a low price

### - Complementary health insurance = ” *mutuelle*” :

The social security only covers 66% of all your medical expenses. To get the 33% left over reimbursed, you can take out a complementary insurance (called *mutuelle* in French). There are two main agencies which offer it: the SMEBA and the LMDE.



## **If you need to get medical treatment**

If it's a little thing you can always go to the school nurse. She's there from 8h00 to 12h00 and from 13h15 to 17h30 every day except on Wednesday. She also can inform you about the doctors.

In France, to get to a specialized doctor, you always have to pass via a general doctor who sends you further.

If you are a first year student, you can consult general doctor from the SUMPPS (**S**ervice **u**niversitaire de **m**édecine **p**réventive et de **p**romotion de la santé) for free. They are only allowed to do little treatments and to give you medical certifications. Unfortunately, you can't go there if you are a second year student or in a master course.

### **Payment and papers:**

If you go to a doctor or if you buy something at a drugstore, you always have to pay it yourself first. Once treated, you can get reimbursed by your insurance. For this you sign the *feuille de soins* that the doctor or the drugstore will have given to you and you send it to your insurance.

For the Europeans: If you don't have a *mutuelle*, you will make your request towards the *Sécurité Sociale* (CPAM). At the first time, you have to join a R.I.B (coordinates of your bank account) and a copy of your European Health Insurance Card to your *feuille de soins*.

If you have any doubt or problem, don't hesitate to ask the school's nurse, she is able to help you.

## Bank account

In France the banking system is a little different in comparison with most of the other countries.

### Chèque :

Indeed, a very useful, quite indispensable, and very widely used means of payment is what we call a “chèque”. It is often used instead of cash or when you can't pay with a credit card. Chèques are also asked to be used as deposits (“une caution”): you fill in the chèque but it will not be cashed (the money will not leave your account because the person you give it to will not give it to the bank) unless there's a problem. This avoids unnecessary money transfers. Most of the time, it's to guarantee that you don't damage rental items (a hotel room, sport equipment, your flat, etc.). Often, associations only accept chèques and not cash. **It is therefore very important for you to open an account as soon as possible when you arrive in France.**



Also you have to learn to use chèques by making sure there is enough money on your account. The chèque will not be cashed most of the time for 2 or 3 days after you wrote it, this can lead to a few difficulties if you're not careful. The bank will refuse to pay the chèque if your account doesn't contain enough money and make you pay extra money for it.

The bank will provide you with a chèque book (small book of chèques) when you open an account with them.

### R.I.B :

A R.I.B is the abbreviation for « Relevé d'Identité Bancaire ». It's a paper on which your bank account number is written. The bank gives you some of them when you open your account. During your stay in France you will certainly be asked to give one of them to somebody. Institutions which reimburse you fees often need one.

If you get asked for one before you have your French bank account, ask your home bank if they can print you a paper with all your identification numbers on it (IBAN Number).

## Meals

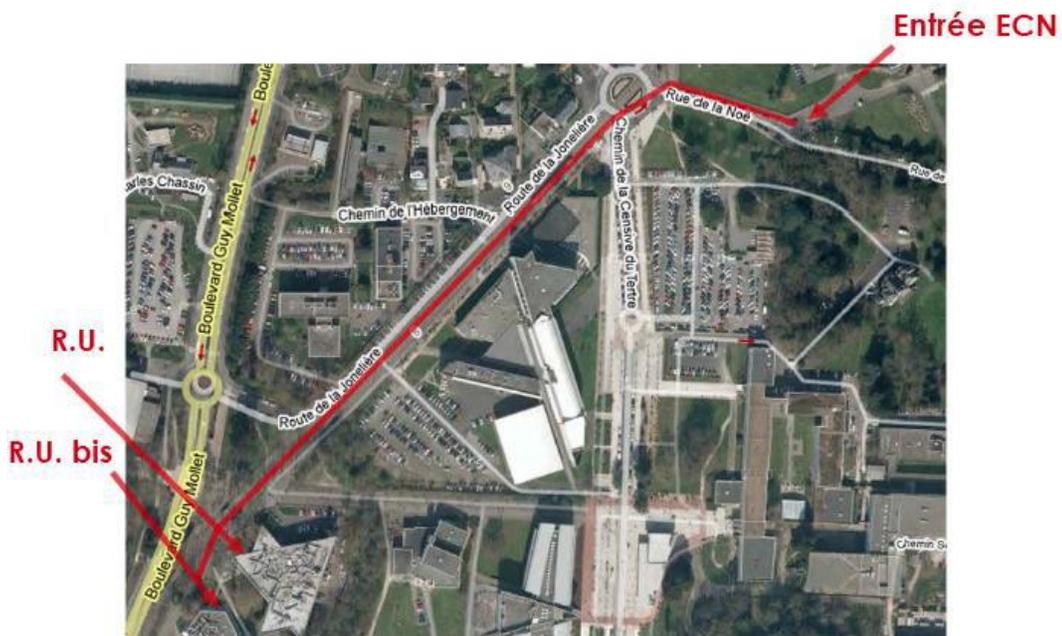
A RU is a University Restaurant (“restaurant universitaire”). There are two RU at only 5 minute walk from the school, they are called “le Tertre” and “le RUBis”. Le Tertre is the larger one and offers various dishes from typical French cooking, pizzas fish and grill up to around the world dishes, but is unfortunately only open on the weekday at lunch time. Le RUBis is open lunch and dinner, from Monday to Saturday, but it doesn’t have a large variety of food.

The RU opens from 11:30 am until 1:30 pm and from 6:30 pm until 8 pm.

Our advice is to arrive before noon to avoid waiting too long since it is often crowded.

To eat in these restaurants, you will have to buy RU tickets that entitle you to: one starter, small bread, one main course and one desert (although you can also take two deserts or two starters instead of one of each, or replace one or the other by a piece of fruit). You can buy these tickets on the ground floor of the RU Le Tertre. One ticket costs 3.5 €.

There is also a cafeteria in the school where you can buy sandwiches for €2,50.



## Transport

The TAN is the company that organises the public transport network around Nantes and its surrounding suburbs. It enables you to travel by Bus and Tram. Transport services work every day (exception made of the 1st of May, Christmas, demonstration days, etc.) from 4h15 am until 00h30 the next day (2h30 on the Saturday).



In order to travel legally you have to use a ticket. There are tickets that last for an hour, a day, a week, a month or a year depending on what you choose to use or what you need.

The BDE (Centrale Nantes student's Union) sells ticket books called "carnets" that contain 10 tickets at a reduced price compared with the automatic machines (11,10€ instead of 12,30€). The tickets are valid for one hour after you stamp them when you get on the tram (there are orange machines you slide your ticket into as soon as you get on).

École Centrale → City Center takes you approximately 15 minutes.

### By bike :



There are a lot of bicycle lanes in Nantes. If you enjoy biking, it might be useful to get one.

You can buy a new bike from a supermarket with 120 €. There are regular flea markets where you can go to buy second-hand bikes at cheaper prices. Some sport shops also organize second-hand markets several times a year.

Another possibility is to rent a bike.

*Vélocampus* has special offers for students. For 40 € they give you a bike for a whole year and you even have access to a couple of activities: repairing classes, tours, etc. [www.velocampus.net](http://www.velocampus.net)

In the city center there are bicloo-stations. You can rent the bikes by paying immediately with your bank card. It's a good system, but you always have to bring your bike back to one of the stations. And unfortunately, there is no station next to the school. [www.bicloo.nantesmetropole.fr](http://www.bicloo.nantesmetropole.fr)

It takes about 20 minutes to bike from École Centrale to the city center.

## Cell phones



You are going to realize that having a phone is indispensable. But certainly you already know that! A “forfait” is a contract that determines what you are allowed to use every month and how much it’ll cost you. In France there are 4 main phone operators: Orange, SFR, Free and Bouygues Telecom. **Free is known to be the cheapest one.**

There are the following options:

### - Les forfaits bloqués :

Blocked *forfaits* is when you pay a certain amount of money per month and in exchange you have a fixed amount of messages or a limited calling time. Once you finish you cannot go over it and keep using your phone: it is blocked. These *forfaits* are usually cheaper and aimed towards younger generations, only the calling times are short, rarely any more than 2 hours. On the other hand you can always pay to refill your phone when it runs out. It’ll cost you around 20€ for 1 hour of calls and unlimited text messages.

### - Les forfaits non bloqués :

Unblocked *forfaits* is when you can go over your monthly allowance, but it’ll cost you to keep calling and it’ll be more expensive than usual: usually 40€ for 3 hours of calls, unlimited messages and internet access.

Be careful: calling abroad is not included in that kind of *forfait*. You will have to buy an additional option for that.

### - Les cartes rechargeables :

You put a certain amount of money on your card in function of what you need. So you don’t have any obligations. In general, the prices are a little bit higher (the main operators will charge you around 0,50€/min), but it is an interesting option if you are not calling often. For a short time internet companies have grown up. With Simyo for example, you can make calls for 0,19€/min.

The easiest is to look on the internet and see what you need. You’ll notice that on some *forfaits* the text messages are unlimited, on others they are not.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask us, we can certainly give you some good advice. To sign up or buy a telephone you will need photocopies of the following documents:

- Passport
- RIB
- Justificatif de domicile: a document that proves your address is what you say it is.

## Your total budget

Taking into account other expenses such as entertainment, clothes, furniture, telephone, you should allow for a minimum monthly budget of €500.

Make sure you allow extra for the first month to cover the deposit for your accommodation, social security, insurance and other initial expenses.

It is recommended to bring an international credit card so you can get money out from cash machines. Make sure you have some cash on you when you arrive to cover your initial expenses (transport, food...) you can also use traveller's cheques.

Produit / Product	Prix / Price	Produit / Product	Prix / Price
Tomatoes	2 € - 3 €	Orange juice	1,88 €/l
Potatoes	2,30 €/kg	Semi skimmed milk	0,80 €/l
Bananas	2,10 €/kg	Beer	2 €/l
Apples	2,50 €/kg	Coca-Cola	0,89 €/l
Spaghetti	2,38 €/kg	Ketchup	4,50 €/kg
Cereals for breakfast	2,16 €/kg	Strawberry Jam	1,50 €/350g
Café (Nescafé)	2,30 €/100g	Baguette	0,70 €
Hot chocolat (Nesquik)	5,30 €/450g	Frozen pizza	2,50€–5,00€
Nutella	5 €/780g	Sandwich	3 €
Kebab	4 €	Harry's bread	1,15 €

### Universitary restaurant

- One ticket : €3,50

### Apartment :

- Deposit : €380

- Electricity : about €30

- Monthly rent (after deducing the APL) : between 100 to €250

### Transport :

- Tram ticket: €1,60

- 10 tram tickets : €12,00 (with BDE)

## Clubs and associations

### - Accents



To help and inform foreign students before their arrival and stay at Centrale Nantes (welcome guide, answer to questions ...)

To welcome foreigners when they arrive (pick-up at the station or airport, welcome week with activities designed to help with administrative work and familiarize with the town and the school ...)

To set up some events linked to intercultural exchanges (dinner, party, trip...)

To take part in the organization of the reception of students that come from foreign universities for a short time.

Contact: [accents@eleves.ec-nantes.fr](mailto:accents@eleves.ec-nantes.fr)

### - BDE (Bureau Des Elèves)

BDE stands for Bureau Des Elèves (student union). It's an association made up of the first grade students.

Their main task is to organize the student life at school. They frequently organize the relaxed evenings on campus (called soirée K) or the popular clubbing nights (called tonus). They negotiate with administration and deal with the budget of the clubs. In a word, they offer many services to make your life at campus easier.

In addition, you can pass by their office (from 10a.m. to 10h15a.m. and from 12h15 to 19h) for buying the tickets of tramway with a reduction, photocopy card, ECN accessories and so on.

Here, you can always find someone to talk with !

Contact: [bde@eleves.ec-nantes.fr](mailto:bde@eleves.ec-nantes.fr)

### - BDS (Bureau Des Sports)

The Bureau des Sports is in charge of organizing sports events inside and outside school. Besides, you will get the opportunity to compete against the students of the other school and even of the other countries.

You have to pay 55€ for the AS (former association in charge of sports management in the school), which allows you to play your favorite sport in the school (you can also choose not to pay, and choose to play your sports in a club outside of the school). This amount goes to the purchase of new sports shirts, new materials or to the reduction of travel fees when games take place out of the school.

Contact : [bds@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:bds@ec-nantes.fr)



### - AED (PhD's Club)

The *Association of PhD Students of the École Centrale de Nantes (AED)* aims to act on 2 distinct and complementary levels. Firstly, on an academical level, it attempts to provide some useful information to Master and PhD students. Secondly, on a sociocultural level, it allows to create social ties between the current PhD students of the 5 laboratories of the École Centrale de Nantes.

**Objective n°1:** inform Master and engineering students about PhD and research

**Objective n°2:** inform PhD students about their future life as young researchers, and about the École Centrale de Nantes and its organization. For instance, it seems important that all PhD students know that they have representatives at the councils of the school (see below).

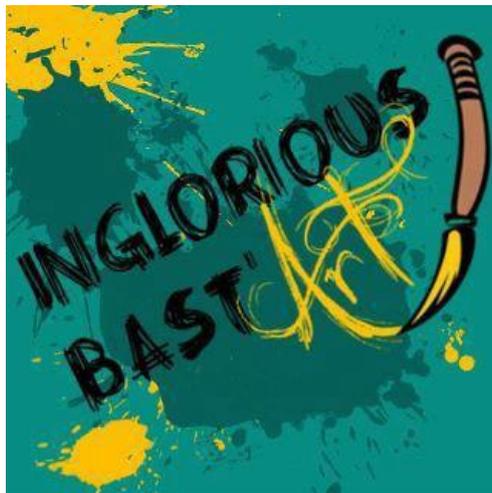
**Objective n°3:** gather together all PhD students for various social or cultural events. These events allow to meet and exchange with other PhD students from the same laboratory or from other laboratories. Several events have already taken place, such as informal seminars or company visits (please refer to the news).

Contact : [AED@ec-nantes.fr](mailto:AED@ec-nantes.fr)

**- BDA (Bureau Des Arts)**

The Bureau des Arts' mission is to promote the art and culture inside the school. They offer kinds of activities like film projections, club night, the expositions and so on. They invite you to participate and bring your personal talent into these activities.

They sell the places of the cinema with a reduction and they offer regular places of the concerts and other shows like dance show or theatre. If you are interested, you can come to our office in Hall L.



**Again, congratulations and welcome to Centrale Nantes ! You'll surely have a rich and colorful year!**