

# STUDYING AT EPFL



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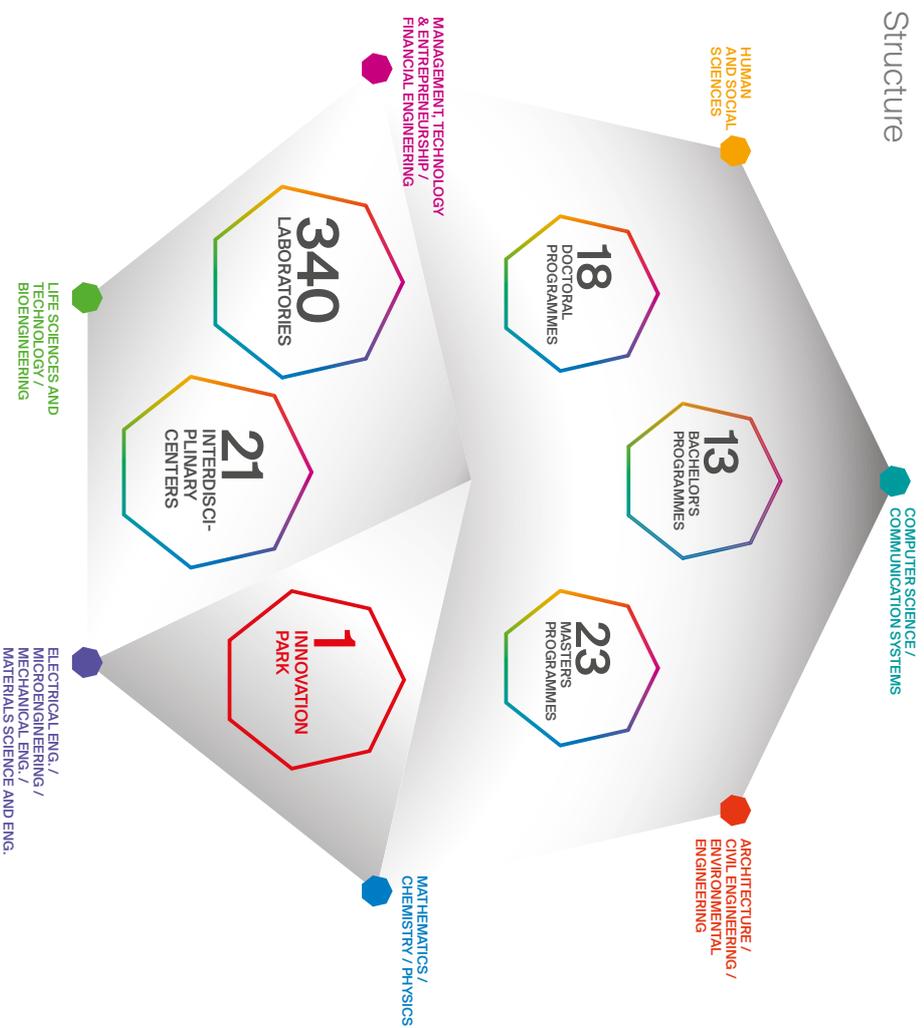
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monokitch  
**Photos**  
Alain Herzog, Mediacom  
**Impression**  
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# EPFL FACTS & FIGURES

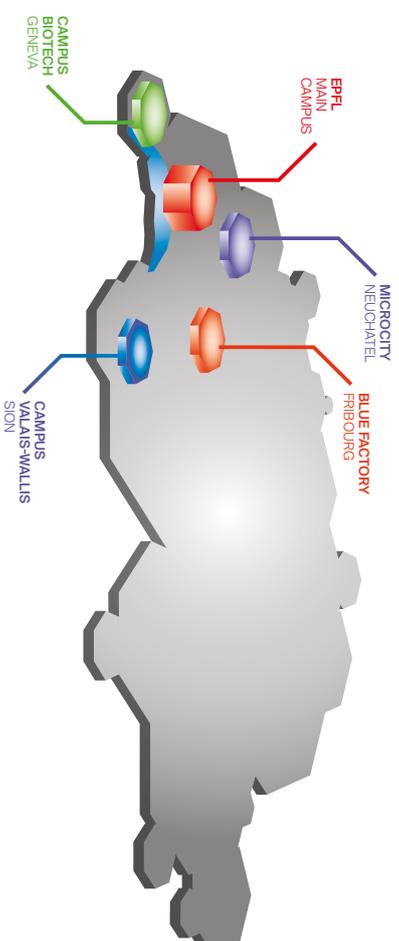
## Structure



## Strengths



## Regional expansions



## Key figures



## STUDY PROGRAMMES OPEN TO THE WORLD

Thirteen different engineering science programmes, customised PhD programmes, cutting-edge laboratories directed by internationally renowned professors, a modern, fast-developing campus spread over some 10,000m<sup>2</sup>, satellite campuses in French-speaking cantons, close ties to industry: the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) offers an exceptional student experience to young people planning a higher education in science and technology.

EPFL has grown considerably since it was founded in 1853. Located on the shores of Lake Geneva in an extraordinary setting, today it resembles a small town where more than 13,000 students and employees from over 120 different countries live and work, making it one of the most cosmopolitan campuses. Specialising in training engineers, providing them with a solid background in basic sciences, EPFL extended its fields of expertise to include life sciences at the beginning of the new millennium. Thanks to its excellence in several different research fields, it is an exceptional place for students. They have here not only the opportunity to interact with internationally renowned researchers but also, upon completing their undergraduate degree, they are able to work in over 300 laboratories equipped with cutting-edge equipment. Strongly focused on its internationally renowned research (as evidenced by various top academic rankings), EPFL has long cultivated links with industry to facilitate the technology transfer of results obtained in its laboratories. This close relationship with the business world is promoted by the presence of an innovation park on campus, an ideal place for any innovative company – from start-ups to multinationals – wanting to collaborate and interact with EPFL.

Since EPFL is well aware of the role future graduates will play in contributing to a sustainable future, the school is not only involved in research on renewable energy but also participates in research toward an economical and environmentally sound building sector. The wide-ranging work carried out by its "Sustainable Campus" unit serves as a strong example. Leisure activities are important while studying both for social interactions and for providing welcome relaxation in the midst of a curriculum that is widely acknowledged as being demanding. Thus, EPFL offers many extra-curricular activities, often in the form of clubs.

Exchange programmes clearly provide rewarding academic experiences. EPFL therefore strongly encourages student exchange, particularly under the auspices of the numerous partnerships which it has set up with prestigious universities and institutes around the world.

Today, EPFL is a high-level polytechnic school, full of dynamism and open to the world.



# PROGRAMMES

EPFL's reputation is based both on the excellence of its research and on the quality and diversity of its academic programmes. While the programmes it offers have been steadily growing over the years, the underlying approach has remained the same: acquiring a solid theoretical knowledge which can quickly be put into practice in laboratories equipped with cutting-edge equipment.

EPFL offers courses not only in engineering disciplines but also in the field of basic sciences and architecture: the school now offers academic programmes at different levels (Bachelor's, Master's and PhD), as well as a wealth of continuing education programmes.

## The BSc

Offered by EPFL in 13 different fields, the BSc forms the first stage of polytechnic studies, during which students acquire the core scientific background within their chosen discipline. This stage, which in principle lasts for three years, is a mandatory prerequisite for the MSc. Translated into ECTS credits, its structure follows Bologna principles.

The first year, often called "apropaeudeutic", focuses on the basic knowledge that every engineer or architect trained in a polytechnic school should possess. While it concentrates on basic sciences (mathematics, physics and chemistry) and computer science, this year also includes few courses devoted to the chosen field. Since these basic subjects are common to many programmes, it's feasible – under certain conditions – to change field at the end of this first year.

### ECTS CREDIT

ECTS? ECTS is the European Credit Transfer System. The ECTS system allows the level attained by students to be assessed by allocating credit for the courses they take. Each ECTS credit is proportional to the amount of work that the student has to produce in terms of course/practical/laboratory work. ECTS is based on the principle that the work undertaken by a student during an academic year is the equivalent of 60 credits. In Europe, the workload of a student enrolled full-time in a degree programme generally comprises a total of 1500 to 1800 hours over a year. This means that an ECTS credit represents between 25 and 30 hours of work.

Once this first stage has been completed, the students can begin their BSc Programme during which teaching focuses on the chosen scientific field. Classes taught during this phase deal with increasingly specific knowledge and acquiring the tools and methodologies necessary for putting theoretical learning into practice. At the same time, students consolidate what they have learned through laboratory work and practical projects. During the third year, they can choose from different options, depending on the MSc they plan to pursue after the BSc.

The BSc is essentially an intermediate degree which ensures that students acquire the essential basic knowledge they need to pursue their studies at the MSc level. While it is not a professional qualification, it facilitates exchanges and, at a formal level, grants 180 ECTS credits during the three years of this first stage.

[bachelor@epfl.ch](#)

"I wanted to study a branch which covers several disciplines. Materials science seems very interesting from this perspective. It's an applied discipline which, by combining chemistry and physics, studies the properties of different materials – metals, polymers, and even ceramics – in order to try to improve them, or even for manufacturing new ones. I arrived in Lausanne four weeks before the semester began in order to take a French class. It was the best thing to do, I met German-speaking Swiss people and students who were here on exchange. If you want to enjoy yourself at EPFL, there's always something to do. For example, there are parties every Thursday evening."

JULIA BRAUN,  
BSC IN MATERIALS

"What I like at EPFL is that there's a good balance between theory classes and applied engineering. During my BSc in Physics, I discovered the field of Computational Sciences and the ways in which computers can be used to simulate scientific phenomena. Computational science programme acts as a bridge between several scientific fields. I'm a computer scientist but I've had the chance to work in partnership with others. In particular civil engineers and mechanical engineers. What I like here is that everyone can customise their degree programme, focusing on Computational Science or Applied Engineering. These options make every degree unique."

DANA CHRISTEN  
MSc IN COMPUTATIONAL  
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

### ONLINE APPLICATIONS, DEADLINES

BSc programmes: April 30 (July 15: update of additional documents such as high-school diploma, grades)  
MSc programmes: choose between January 15, or April 15.  
The admissions department will send confirmation of your application that contains useful information about starting your studies  
Monday of week 38 (mid-September): start of classes. Welcome day for new students takes place on the previous Friday.

The MSc is both a university and a professional qualification, composed of completing 90 or 120 ECTS credits over a period of two years. The number of credits depends on both the department in question and the selected specialisations and minors.

At the end of this graduate programme, the student obtains an EPFL Master of Science specifying the minor which was taken. Depending on the programme, the graduate will be entitled to use the title of Engineer, Mathematician, Physicist, Chemist, or EPFL-qualified Architect, titles that are all officially recognised by the Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities. The EPFL MSc is also officially recognised in France by the Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (Engineering Diploma Commission).

[master@epfl.ch](#)

## The MSc

Divided into 23 different programmes, including five specialised Master's, the MSc carries on from the BSc but is distinguished by its increased specialisation. It aims to expand students' theoretical learning and to increase the opportunities to put these into practice within a multidisciplinary context.

The MSc is also distinguished from the BSc by the increased flexibility which students have to customise the content of their course, in particular through "minors." These are termed as "interdisciplinary", if they deal with a cross-disciplinary field in several departments, or "disciplinary" if they are offered by another department than the one in which the student is enrolled.

One of the features of the EPFL MSc is the individual project which must usually be completed during the final six months of the degree. It can be carried out within an EPFL laboratory or – since exchanges are strongly encouraged at this stage of the course – in another university, or even in a company. In addition, all engineering MScs include a company internship of at least eight weeks which facilitates links with the professional workplace.

### MINORS

Interdisciplinary  
Biotechnology / Technology Management and Entrepreneurship / Area & Cultural Studies / Territorial Development and Urban Planning / Integrated Design, Architecture and Sustainability (IDEAS) / Computational Science and Engineering / Space Technologies / Energy / Biomedical Technologies / Biocomputing / Computational Neurosciences / Neuroprosthetics

### SPECIALISED MScs

Management, Technology & Entrepreneurship / Financial Engineering / Energy Management and Sustainability / Nuclear Engineering / Computational Science and Engineering



## The PhD

The highest academic degree, is also the highest level of qualification awarded by EPFL. This qualification confers a certain prestige and offers unique professional opportunities. Being a PhD student at EPFL entails taking on the simultaneous roles of student, researcher and teacher, while benefiting from first-class equipment and infrastructure. Usually obtained at the end of four years of study devoted to an original and independent scientific research project, it grants the right to use the title of doctor of science (PhD). Doctoral work is carried out under the supervision of an EPFL professor, within an EPFL laboratory or a federal research institution, or within industry. This last option promotes links with the professional world.

*"I did my BSc and MSc within the school of Life Sciences. It was my MSc project which gave me the taste for research and convinced me to do a PhD here, because EPFL is one of the few schools that teaches both biology and engineering. I'm studying diabetes. Even though it's an illness which is well-known, there are still many unanswered questions, particularly concerning the mechanisms which trigger diabetes. To try to find answers, I'm applying and developing techniques based on microscopy using optical coherence."*

CORINNE BERGLAZ  
PHD STUDENT PHOTONICS  
PROGRAMME

For all levels of study (BSc, MSc or PhD), EPFL's rules of admission depend on the academic background that the prospective student has already received. Detailed information is available at:

Bachelor: [bachelor.epfl.ch/admission](http://bachelor.epfl.ch/admission)  
Master: [master.epfl.ch/admission](http://master.epfl.ch/admission)  
Doctorat: [phd.epfl.ch/application](http://phd.epfl.ch/application)

### ADMISSION CRITERIA

PhD students also enjoy the status of EPFL employees. In return, they are required to teach classes and seminars. A particularly rewarding experience if the PhD student plans to pursue an academic career.

The qualification of Doctor of Science is awarded when candidates have completed the minimum ECTS credits required for each programme, and after they have successfully passed a viva examination in front of a panel of specialists.

[phd.epfl.ch](http://phd.epfl.ch)

## Cours de Mathématiques Spéciales (CMS)

The Cours de Mathématiques Spéciales (CMS) enables students who do not have the requisite qualifications to enroll directly into the 1<sup>st</sup> year to expand their knowledge before beginning their studies at EPFL. Lasting for two semesters and assessed by a series of examinations, passing the CMS guarantees access to the BSc programmes in all the different departments of the school. Directly accessible to candidates who hold a Swiss vocational baccalaureate («Maturité Professionnelle»), CMS admission is conditionally open for other applicants.

Taking the CMS also affords the opportunity to learn about how EPFL operates from an insider's perspective and to get to know its lecturers and equipment.

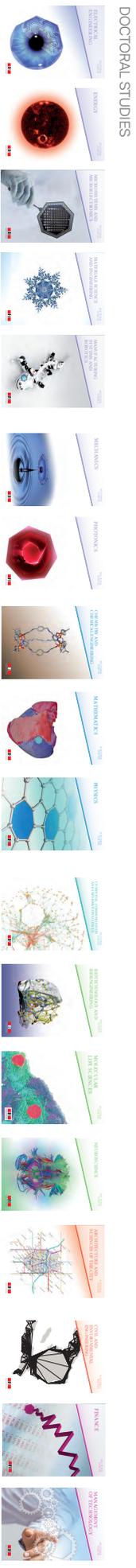
[cms.epfl.ch](http://cms.epfl.ch)

*"Initially completed an IT apprenticeship with Swisscom in Brig, at the same time as a vocational baccalaureate, I decided to continue my studies and so took the Cours de Mathématiques Spéciales (CMS) to prepare for starting the BSc at EPFL. The CMS is a preparatory class designed for students who do not have the requisite qualifications to enroll directly at EPFL. It's a kind of bridge class which focuses on mathematics, physics, biology and chemistry. I advise students who've taken the vocational baccalaureate to take this course."*

ADRIAN BLUMENTHAL  
PHD STUDENT MATHEMATICS

An aerial photograph of a city at sunset, showing a mix of modern and traditional buildings, green spaces, and a waterfront. A large, semi-transparent red geometric shape, resembling a stylized arrow or a large 'V', is overlaid on the right side of the image. The text 'RANGE OF PROGRAMMES' is written in white, uppercase letters within this red shape.

RANGE  
OF PROGRAMMES



## STRENGTHS

### Open to the world

EPFL believes that the variety, flexibility and cross-disciplinarity it provides in its curriculum are necessary for contemporary society, where policies and technologies are endlessly evolving, sometimes in contradictory ways. Engineers play a crucial role: they must know the past and master the present in order to design the future. This is a task which requires both specialist knowledge and a good overview of general culture. This is why, for the past few years and with a view to training engineers who are "open to the world", EPFL requires that its students take classes in the fields of Social and Human Sciences (SHS). Taught by the College of Humanities, these classes cover a varied range of topics (Cultures and Civilisation, Aesthetics, Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology, Economics and Society).

### High-level science

EPFL makes a point of including all the necessary ingredients needed for developing academic research at the highest level. This desire for excellence is also reflected in the cutting-edge equipment found in its laboratories. Eager to ensure that students make the most of them, they are offered rapid access to these laboratories within the framework of their projects or their work.

### REGIONAL SATELLITES

While still largely based in the city of Lausanne, EPFL has recently undertaken several initiatives to expand its presence throughout French-speaking Switzerland. This has resulted in the recent development of satellite campuses in most other cantons:

EPFL Valais Wallis in Sion,  
Campus Biotech in Geneva,  
BlueFACTORY in Fribourg,  
Microcity in Neuchâtel.

### HUMANISTIC EDUCATION

The College of Humanities (CDH) subscribes to the view that EPFL's high-level programmes also require the development of expertise in social and human sciences. Today, this community is comprised of around 80 professors, most of whom are affiliated with the University of Lausanne, but who are also from EPFL or other partner institutions such as the Ecole cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAJL) and the Haute école d'art et de design in Genève (HEAD).

## Change of scenery

Since it maintains many partnerships with prestigious schools around the world, EPFL hosts a lot of students from these institutions. It also encourages its students to carry out a portion of their studies at a partner university. As well as expanding cultural horizons, such an exchange offers the unique opportunity to make valuable contact with professors and students from other prestigious institutions. Provided that students have obtained a high grade point average in their 1<sup>st</sup> year, exchanges become possible during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the BSc. To ensure that the exchange is pedagogically useful, we recommend that EPFL's study plan is examined carefully and that a host university which offers a comparable programme is selected. To help applicants make their selection and organise their exchange, they can rely on the assistance of EPFL's student exchange department and on the support of the exchange coordinators in every department.

For the MSc, exchanges are only authorised within the context of the final-year project. In order to gain the maximum benefit from an exchange, it is then essential students take time to meet with the EPFL professor specialised in their chosen field. In this way, they can best benefit from EPFL's contacts with partner universities, which will help facilitate their departure for and integration within their host university. During their study abroad, students remain enrolled in EPFL and an exchange does not normally extend the duration of their studies.

[saee.epfl.ch/exchange-outgoing](http://saee.epfl.ch/exchange-outgoing)

### EXCHANGES WITH

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, USA

## Contact with the business world

Even though it is essentially a place of academic research, EPFL never forgets that its identity as an engineering school also relies on close contacts with the business world. These links are particularly reflected in the importance that it gives to internships in companies, which are a mandatory component of all engineering programmes.

This focus on the business world is also seen in the programmes which have been set up to facilitate students' transition into the professional sphere. The Career Center offers an internship database, along with individual trainings and assessments to enable every student to prepare for their employability and start their career in the best conditions.

### CAREER CENTER

The Career Center acts as a bridge between EPFL and the business world. To assist students who are in the process of entering the working world, it offers individual sessions and training focusing on the employability and the development of soft skills.

[careerepfl.ch](http://careerepfl.ch)

### THE EPFL FORUM

A massive job fair that takes place every year, the "EPFL Forum" is a unique opportunity for students to meet representatives from some 200 companies, including many with long-standing ties to EPFL.

The EPFL Forum enables young graduates and PhD students to learn about job market expectations and to find out more about the companies in attendance with a view to landing a job which best matches their skill sets. Other students can benefit from this event by researching internships and gathering information that can help them plan the remainder of their studies.

[forum.epfl.ch](http://forum.epfl.ch)

"A PhD not only gives you the opportunity to acquire knowledge – which you do a lot of – but also, in a certain sense, to expand the field of knowledge. This is something that I find extremely interesting and also very rewarding. (...) I am affiliated to the Transportation Center and through this center I can directly interact with partners from industry. This is a unique opportunity to do high level research and, at the same time, understand what is going on in practice and to exchange with practitioners."

FLURIN HANSELER  
PHD STUDENT CIVIL  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
ENGINEERING  
PROGRAMME

## Rapidly developing infrastructure

Given the desire to attract the best scientists, EPFL puts great energy into developing its infrastructure. The development policy the school has implemented over the past few years has resulted in the completion of several major projects to address the steady increase in staff.

The aim is to offer a site which is conducive to the scientific creativity of its academic community.

Among these key projects, the Rolex Learning Center, which has fast become emblematic of student life at EPFL, is especially noteworthy. This architecturally innovative and unique building hosts workshops, restaurants, a bookshop, as well as the library.

Another recent and spectacular development is the building of the Convention Center and student housing close to the EPFL metro station. In addition to being able to hold major events and markedly increase student-housing availability within the EPFL site, the reorganization of this area also reflects EPFL's desire to ensure that its campus becomes a lively and friendly place both inside and outside of the academic frame.

### LIBRARY

Located in the Rolex Learning Center, EPFL's library is both a site of information and documentation and a place to meet and work. Open to the public, it specialises in the EPFL's academic and research areas and gives invaluable access to information in both written and digital formats: over 40,000 e-books, 10,000 online journals, and 500,000 books. With generous opening hours (from 7 am to midnight, 7 days a week), the Rolex Learning Center offers optimal working conditions to students with 860 workstations equipped with a power socket and Internet access via the WiFi network. This area also has photocopiers, printers and scanners which are freely accessible. Two book scanners additionally allow for documents to be digitised without damaging them.

library@epfl.ch



"At EPFL, the BSc provides you with the tools that you can then apply in the MSc. The first year is mainly made up of classes, and you have to do an internship during the second year. This enables you to appreciate what working in industry is like. Everyone can build up their own study programme; the teaching style here is very open. I like this school because it's international; you learn a lot about other cultures, other ways of working. For example, someone who has studied in Istanbul wouldn't do their project the same way as me."

MINA BIELOGRUC  
M.Sc. IN ELECTRICAL  
AND ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING



## A "Sustainable Campus"

EPFL is fully aware of the example it must set with respect to sustainable development, which is why it established a unit in charge of coordinating, supporting and developing all initiatives connected with sustainability on campus. These initiatives naturally aim to reduce the social and environmental impact related to the development and operation of the school, but they also have the aim of making the campus into a genuine, living laboratory for sustainable development.

These initiatives have notably resulted in the vigorous promotion of soft mobility (making bikes available) and in promoting the use of renewable energy (photovoltaic cells and hydroelectric systems).

## Language proficiency

In order to promote and encourage the development of linguistic proficiency and cultural awareness, EPFL offers free language classes all year round to its students through the Language Center located directly on campus.

Language proficiency is often the gateway to a successful professional life. Proficiency in two languages is now a minimum expectation and increasingly employers want at least three. Even if the language of Molière remains the official one used by the school in its legal texts, the language of Shakespeare is still felt more strongly. EPFL recommends that students have a minimum level of C1 in the languages of instruction (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language scale), and level B2 is required for foreign students enrolling in CMS and BSc programmes.

# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

## Cost of living in Switzerland

Living standards and costs in Switzerland are high. We estimate that students should set aside at least CHF 2,000 per month.

Tuition fees, on the other hand, are modest. They stand at CHF 633 per semester for students enrolled in BSc, MSc and CMS programmes, not including enrollment fees (CHF 50 or CHF 150).

For exchange students, these fees are not applicable or are significantly reduced.

They are also not applicable to PhD students, but the thesis examination costs CHF 1,200.

## Housing

Looking for suitable housing is often a difficult task. Demand outstrips supply, as is frequently the case in university towns. It is therefore better to start looking for housing as soon as possible. The EPFL housing office provides valuable information and advice to help with the search. It works, in particular, to retain trusted landlords and to find new ones, in order to meet the needs of an ever-increasing student community. In addition to the private-housing ads listed in the EPFL database, there are also several student residences. [logement.epfl.ch/housing](http://logement.epfl.ch/housing)

## Scholarships & grants

Prospective EPFL students have several possibilities for obtaining grants. [sae.epfl.ch/grants](http://sae.epfl.ch/grants)

Swiss students or residents can contact the Grant Office of their parents' canton of residence prior to starting their course. Such grants are awarded in accordance with criteria pertaining to family circumstances and income. In the event of the canton refusing to award a grant, depending on the individual circumstances on a case-by-case basis, it is still possible to qualify for an EPFL grant. [sae.epfl.ch/cantonal-grants](http://sae.epfl.ch/cantonal-grants)

Grants are also available for Swiss students who live abroad and who are advised to contact the Organisation des suisses de l'Étranger (OSE) or Organisation of the Swiss Abroad). Grants are only very rarely awarded to foreigners non-resident in Switzerland. They are awarded following the successful completion of first year of studies at the very earliest. [sae.epfl.ch/grants-foreign-students](http://sae.epfl.ch/grants-foreign-students)

MSc students may be awarded excellence fellowships on the basis of outstanding academic performance. [master.epfl.ch/excellence-fellowships](http://master.epfl.ch/excellence-fellowships)

Continuing-education and PhD students who are members of the Association des Anciens de l'EPFL (the EPFL Alumni Association) may obtain interest-free loans. [epflalumni.ch/page/prets-dhonneur](http://epflalumni.ch/page/prets-dhonneur)

Lastly, it is possible to obtain funding from private foundations.

## Public transport

EPFL is located about an hour from Geneva Airport. Lausanne railway station is a hub for many Swiss and European destinations. Since the price of rail tickets is quite high, we recommend that you purchase a half-fare travel card or take advantage of the Voie 7 card. [voie7.ch](http://voie7.ch)

There is a highly-developed public-transport network in Lausanne. You can use the same ticket to travel by train, bus and metro across the entire city and suburbs of Lausanne. [t-lic](http://t-lic)

The cycling network is also well developed and EPFL has 1500 secure and free parking spots for bikes. Members of the school may borrow a bike using their CAMIPRO card. <http://developpement-durable.epfl.ch/bike-sharing>

There are fee-paying parking spaces on the EPFL site for car users. It is possible to obtain a parking badge for the EPFL site. [parking.epfl.ch](http://parking.epfl.ch)

## Healthcare

Medical and accident insurance is mandatory in Switzerland. All foreign students must obtain coverage through an insurance company that is officially recognised in Switzerland. [sae.epfl.ch/insurance](http://sae.epfl.ch/insurance)

Should the need arise, EPFL has a sickbay known as the Health Spot (Point Santé). There are also several medical centres located close to campus, as well as the University Hospital of Lausanne (the Centre hospitalier universitaire vaudois, or CHUV).

## Residence permit and visa

Within two weeks of arriving in Switzerland, you must officially notify the residents' registration office of the commune in which you reside. [sae.epfl.ch/residence-permit](http://sae.epfl.ch/residence-permit)

Citizens of EU countries do not need a visa. It is a requirement for all other countries, and an application should be submitted to your nearest Swiss embassy or consulate. [sae.epfl.ch/visa-en](http://sae.epfl.ch/visa-en)

### CAMIPRO CARD

Every member of EPFL has a CAMIPRO card with an electronic chip which acts as an ID card and provides access to a host of services. It gives access to a number of protected premises, allows you to borrow a bike, and also acts as an electronic wallet.

Data and information on your card can be accessed at any time on the website. [camipro.epfl.ch](http://camipro.epfl.ch)

## Restaurants and shops

With over twenty restaurants and food vendors on site at EPFL, there is no danger of going hungry. Menus are served Monday to Friday from 11.30 am to 2 pm and from 6 pm to 8.30 pm. A discount applies when you pay with your CAMIPRO card. Weekly menu offerings are posted online. [restauration.epfl.ch](http://restauration.epfl.ch)

There are several specialist businesses located on campus, such as a bank, a post office, food vendors, public-transport desks, a travel agent, and other services. [information.epfl.ch/shops](http://information.epfl.ch/shops) or [sae.epfl.ch/supplies](http://sae.epfl.ch/supplies)

## Help

EPFL has set up the HELP network which offers assistance through its four networks: psychological and social support, IT issues, directory of people and places, health and safety. [help.epfl.ch](http://help.epfl.ch)





## SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

"I studied in Brazil and I've been in Switzerland for two years. The level of studies at EPFL is very high and the atmosphere is wonderful. Given that there's no competition between students, we all help each other, and the lecturers are ready to lend students an ear. I'm the president of Beramine, a club which raises funds for the study-abroad programme in the third year by having a bar set up during events organised at EPFL. The bar offers cocktails specially created using our grounding in chemistry. The reason I chose to come to EPFL was because of its prestige, the level of education that it provides, the campus, and the atmosphere here."

CHARLES POIRROT  
BSC IN CHEMISTRY

## Culture and events

EPFL directly organises special cultural events on campus. [culture.epfl.ch](http://culture.epfl.ch)

Lausanne and the surrounding area offer a wide range of cultural activities and several internationally renowned museums, such as the Musée de l'Élysée, devoted to photography, the Collection de l'art brut, the Contemporary Applied Art and Design Museum, and the Hermitage Foundation. There is also no shortage of stage productions, notably at the Théâtre de Vidy and the Ballet Béjart. Music is also well represented. The capital city of Vaud houses several concert venues, such as the Docks. Two of the largest European music festivals are held every summer not far from Lausanne: the Montreux Jazz festival and the Paléo Festival in Nyon.

## Fiesta

It is sometimes good to unwind with a drink, listening to music, or dancing. EPFL's iconic location is undoubtedly the Satellite, where you can enjoy a drink, listen to some music, or attend a concert. Every spring, the Balelec Festival transforms the campus into a place of celebration with bars, dance floors, and concerts. The event attracts some 20,000 spectators every year.

## Sports

Sports are not only for exercise. They also make it possible to form friendships. EPFL and the University of Lausanne (UNIL) share a common sports centre. Benefiting from an exceptional location on the shores of Lake Geneva, the centre offers facilities for over one hundred different individual and group sports. There are several university sports clubs, affording interested students the chance to participate in university-level championships. [sport.unil.ch](http://sport.unil.ch)

## Clubs

There is a vast range of clubs and community-related activities at EPFL. The school has some 60 clubs offering a variety of activities which allow newly-arrived students the chance to become integrated into campus life, including: sports, board or online games, festivals, theatre, singing, music, and even preparation for the workplace. [associations.epfl.ch](http://associations.epfl.ch)

AGEPOLY is EPFL's general student association. It is responsible for safeguarding their interests within the school, in particular with respect to governance, and it oversees events on campus. [agepoly.epfl.ch](http://agepoly.epfl.ch)

EPFL Alumni is the association for graduate students. Its members get access to an exclusive international network of contacts, and maintain a strong and sustainable connection with their school. [epflalumni.ch](http://epflalumni.ch)





## INTEGRATION

### Welcome activities

To help newly arrived students integrate, EPFL has coaches available to facilitate embarking on university life. Welcome activity programmes for international students are also offered.

[sae.epfl.ch/coaching](mailto:sae.epfl.ch/coaching)

[sae.epfl.ch/internationals-welcome](mailto:sae.epfl.ch/internationals-welcome)

Freshers' Week is organised during the week prior to the start of the academic year in September by EPFL's general student association, AGEPOLY.

[agepoly@epfl.ch](mailto:agepoly@epfl.ch)[agepoly.ch](https://www.agepoly.ch)[agepoly.ch/animation/si](https://www.agepoly.ch/animation/si)

Welcome day is held on the Friday before the start of the academic year. Attendance is required for all new students.

[sae.epfl.ch/welcome-day](mailto:sae.epfl.ch/welcome-day)

### Language Centre

For learning three of the four national languages – French, German and Italian – and English, EPFL's Language Centre offers various options through modules: specific, intensive, independent (multimedia zone), and in tandem classes etc. Intensive modules in French are specifically tailored for new non-French-speaking students before the start of the Fall term. They are intended for exchange students and for students embarking on an MSc or PhD. These classes are free of charge.

[langues.epfl.ch](https://www.epfl.ch/langues-epfl/ch)

### Access for everyone

EPFL is committed to facilitating the integration and well-being of individuals with disabilities, who can, for example, request special arrangements for their schedule. The school also provides advice and contact details for assistance with access, legal and personal issues, specially accessible apartments, and transport.

[sae.epfl.ch/disabled-persons](mailto:sae.epfl.ch/disabled-persons)

### Childcare

Students can fit alongside parenting. PhD students and other students with children may contact EPFL's two childcare centres: Croquisnole and Psychinelle. As with elsewhere, demand is much higher than supply, so it is advisable to apply ahead of time.

[sae.epfl.ch/childcare](mailto:sae.epfl.ch/childcare)

### More about Switzerland

If you are from another country, you most likely want to learn about Swiss culture and differences. This can also be a good opportunity to make contact with local people. Switzerland has four official languages: German, French, Italian and Romansh. There is a large population of foreign residents. Each different language region in Switzerland has a special relationship with its neighbouring country. Since the Swiss live in a multilingual environment, they are accustomed to diversity.

[swissworld.org](https://www.swissworld.org)  
[myswitzerland.com](https://www.myswitzerland.com)



# USEFUL ADDRESSES

**EPFL**, CH-1015-Lausanne,  
Phone: +41 21 693 11 11  
epfl.ch  
prospectivestudent.epfl.ch

**"Student Services"**  
helpdesk for all questions  
you might have

Phone: +41 21 693 43 45,  
student.services@epfl.ch

**Study programmes,  
guidance & advisory**  
bachelor.epfl.ch  
master.epfl.ch  
phd.epfl.ch

**Funding studies,  
scholarships & grants,  
housing, health insurance**  
Student Affairs Office,  
sae.epfl.ch

**Cours de mathématiques  
spéciales**

Phone: +41 21 693 22 95,  
cms@epfl.ch  
cms.epfl.ch

