

EDUCATION, LEISURE, WORK, HOUSING: LIVING MY LIFE AS A STUDENT IN 2023

SURVEY



SURVEY CONTENT

Introduction	03
Methodology and acknowledgements	03
1/ Mapping the student	04
Student profile	
Regional specificities	
2/ Diving into a varied daily life	10
Hybrid courses, advantages and limitations	
Studying, working and managing after-school time	
3/ And the residence in all this	17
The issue of access to accommodation	
Residential services	
Conclusion.....	24

INTRODUCTION

For this third survey dedicated to understanding the needs and expectations of students, we have decided not just to ask them about their relationship with digital technology, but rather ask them about their day-to-day lives as a whole, in order to understand the different facets of their experiences.

It's a fact, students are more connected than ever: in 2023, they consumed an average of 200 GB of data per month on their residence WiFi network, i.e. twice as much as during the 2020 lockdowns. Three years after the Covid-19 pandemic, these figures can no longer be explained solely by the effect of lockdowns.

The higher education landscape has undergone major changes. Students in 2023 are increasingly aware of the challenges of sustainable development and environmental protection. Sustainability has become an important subject in the curricula of many universities, and students have begun to show an interest in more environmentally-friendly campuses.

However, this awareness is often overtaken by the economic reality of young people. They are both dependent on what's offered and their budget. And this is where residence operators have a role to play. They can do this by offering accommodation that is in line with economic and ecological concerns, by putting digital responsibility at the heart of their business, as well as setting up awareness-raising campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

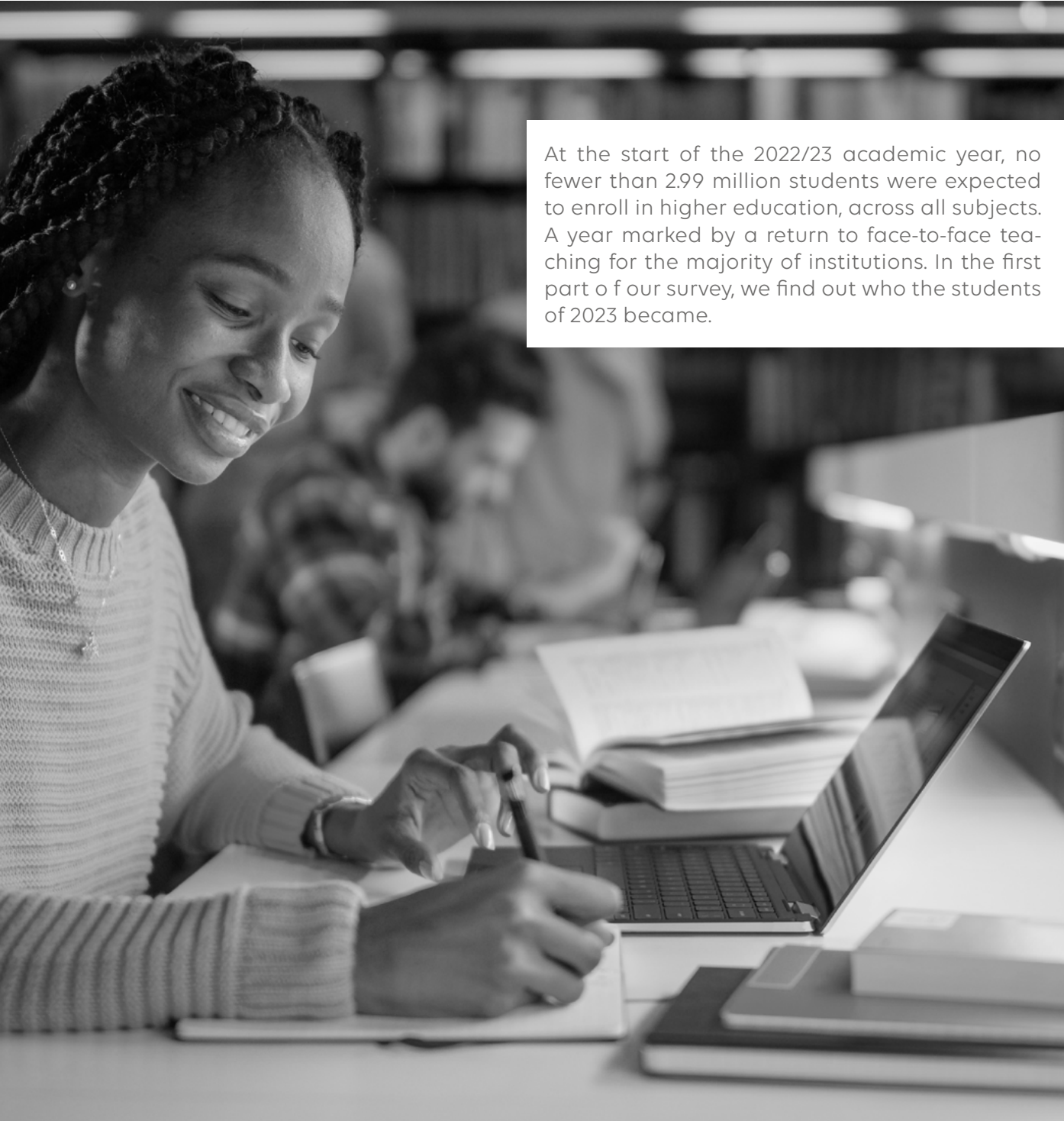
8,716 students living in a Wifirst-equipped student residence answered a 53-question online questionnaire.

A qualitative section completes the survey with comments from **Apolline Dumar**, Vice-president of Social Affairs, FAGE, and **Philippe Campinchi**, General Delegate of AIREs.

They gave us the insight we needed to fully understand the issues addressed in this survey.

01

STUDENT MAPPING



At the start of the 2022/23 academic year, no fewer than 2.99 million students were expected to enroll in higher education, across all subjects. A year marked by a return to face-to-face teaching for the majority of institutions. In the first part of our survey, we find out who the students of 2023 became.

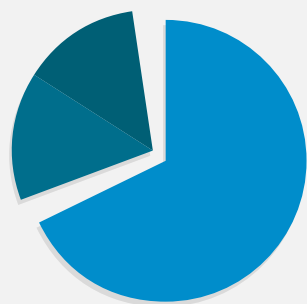
KEY POINTS

- The majority of young people surveyed were their first two years of higher education (53%)
- Only 12% of students follow a work-linked training course
- 59% receive grants and 71% study mainly at university

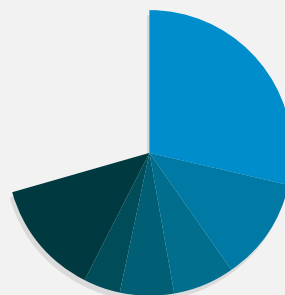
1/ MAPPING THE STUDENT

The average age of respondents to our survey is 21. They are 41% male and 59% female. The majority were French (83%), on scholarships (59%) and studying for a bachelor's degree (32% were in first year). Science degrees are the most represented among the students surveyed (41%), and only 12% of them are following an apprenticeship.

WHAT TYPE OF SCHOOL ARE YOU STUDYING AT?

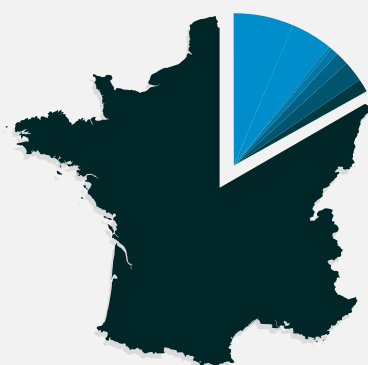


- 71% University
- 15% Private higher education
- 14% Other



- 41% Scientific degree
- 17% Humanities and social sciences degree
- 10% Economics and management degree
- 9% Literary degree
- 6% Law degree
- 18% Other

ARE YOU A FOREIGN STUDENT?

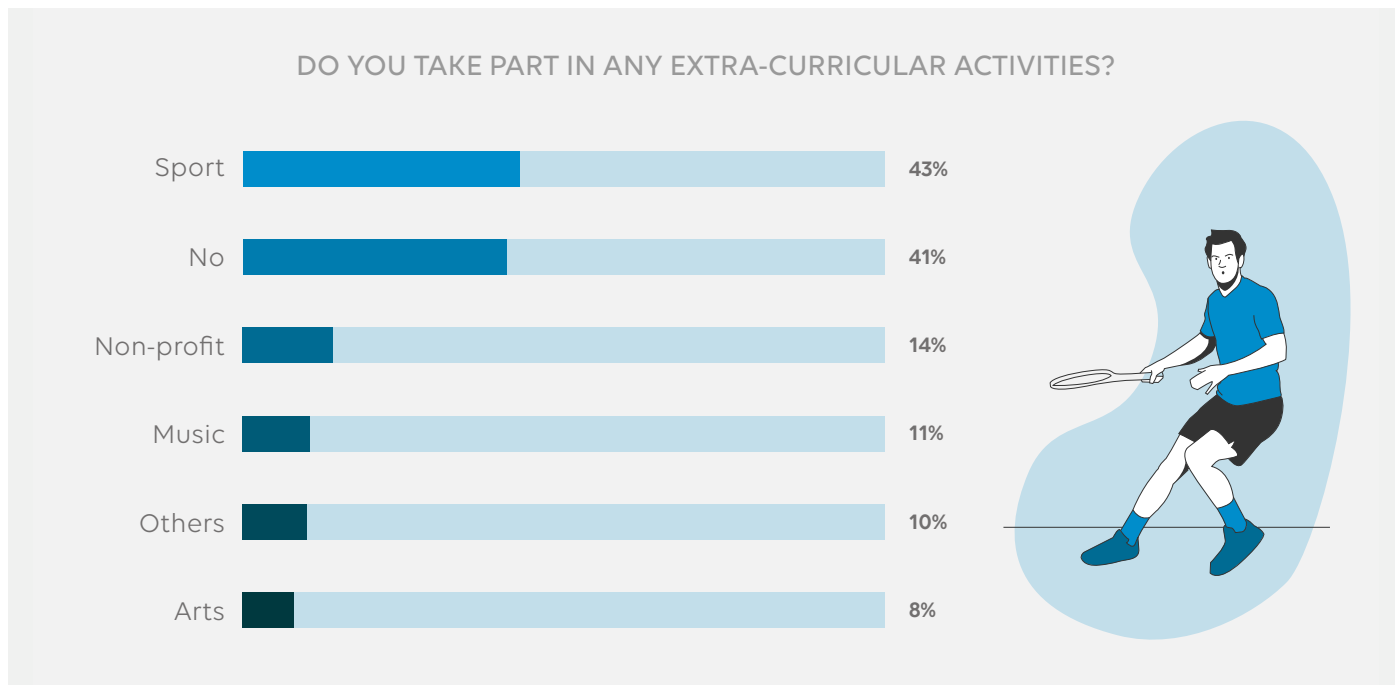


17% foreigners, including :

- 64% Africa
- 6% America
- 8% Asia
- 14% Europe
- 8% Middle East

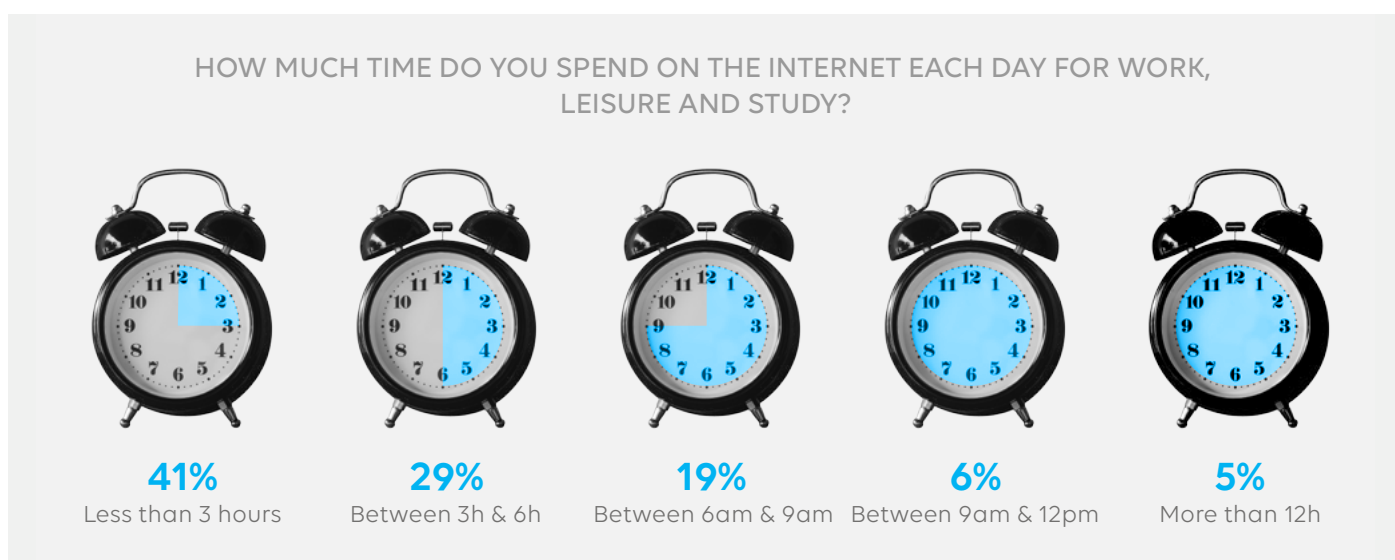
Outside school hours, 43% of students take part in regular sporting activities. To understand this figure, we have drawn on the IGESR's (which is the General Inspectorate of Education, Sport and Research in France) latest study on the development of student sport, published in January 2023.

The report highlights the obstacles and inequalities that some students face when it comes to taking part in sport. It identifies problems such as the lack of suitable sports facilities, the lack of time available due to academic workloads, financial difficulties and disparities in access to a variety of sporting activities. This could explain the 41% of students who do not take part in any activity outside of school hours.



Within universities, the SUAPS (which is University Physical and Sports Activities Department) is responsible for organizing and promoting physical and sporting activities. Thanks to this service, students can take advantage of special timetables to practice their sport at their university. However, there is still a long way to go before the SUAPS are fully democratized, as «75-80% of students don't go to the SUAPS». In addition, 14% of students are involved in voluntary activities.

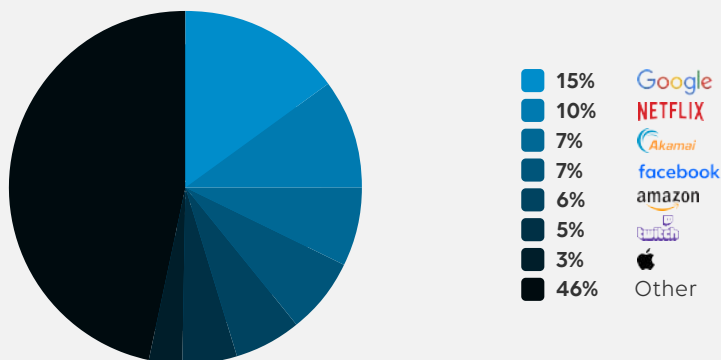
So what do students do in their spare time? 70% of our respondents spend more than 3 hours on the internet for leisure. 62% of them spend more than 3 hours on the internet as part of their job and 58% for their studies. This trend is confirmed by the high number of electronic devices owned by young people: 6 on average. The most astonishing figure shows 4% of students do not own a smartphone.



² <https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2023-02/rapport-igesr-21-22-352a-26349.pdf>

Let's try and understand what young people are doing on the Internet during 'that time'. In reality, it's all going very fast when you're listening to music via an online subscription such as Spotify, Apple or Amazon music; dining in front of Netflix after ordering UberEats; and playing video games on the network or even your smartphone. According to the SELL/Médiamétrie survey in November 2022, 92% of 18-14 year-olds play video games, and 22% of them play several times a day. Mobile games top the list of genres played in France (36%).

INTERNET USAGE (WIFIRST NETWORK CORE - STUDENT PARK)



« There are now students who multitask. They can do their homework and watch a series at the same time. »

Philippe CAMPINCHI, General Delegate of AIRES

It all may seem like a bit of a myth, but it's not that far from every day reality. And it's in line with the overall trend in traffic in France, which reached 43.2 terabits per second by the end of 2022, an increase of 21.5% over one year.

In the same respect, notebooks are being abandoned in favour of laptops and mobile tablets for note-taking as soon as they leave secondary school.

This overuse of the Internet also entails a risk linked to inequalities in access to IT equipment.

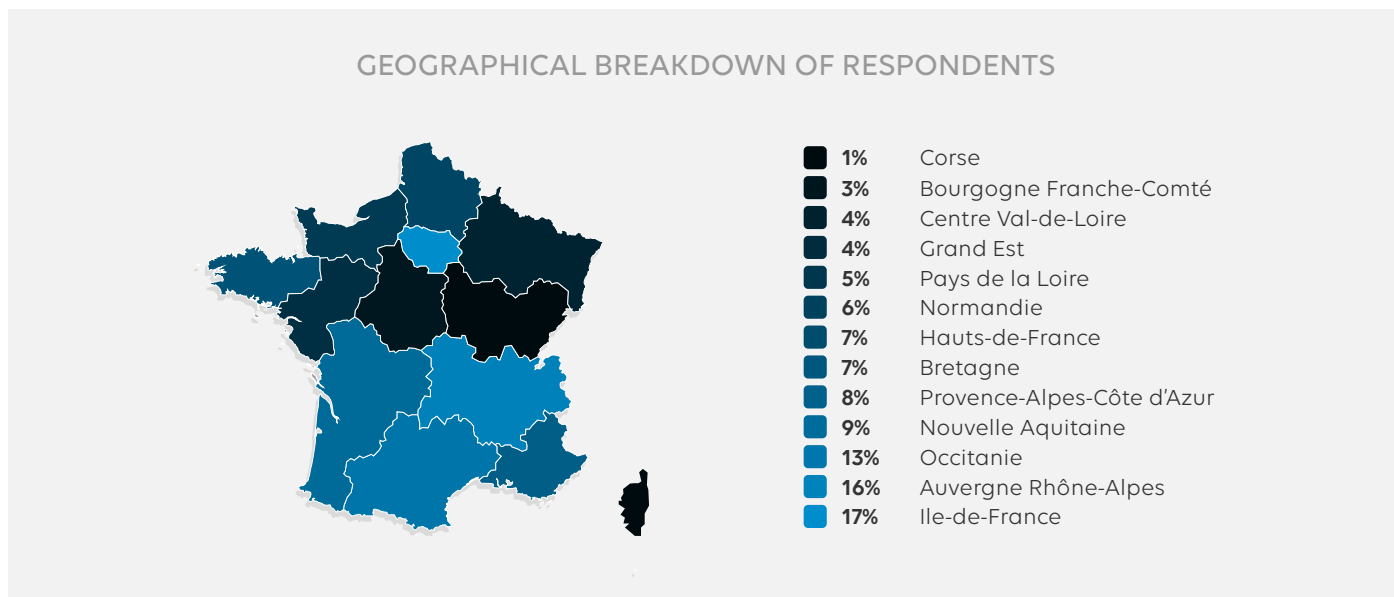
« When an employee works remotely, the company has a duty to provide them with appropriate IT equipment. On the other hand, if a student is having difficulty with the equipment, the university doesn't usually install an internet box! At the very most, the university will lend them a computer. But there isn't the same support or the same resources as in an employment situation »

Apolline DUMAR, Vice-President of Social Affairs, FAGE

³ https://www.sell.fr/sites/default/files/essentiel-jeu-video/lessentiel_du_jeu_video_nov_22_0.pdf

⁴ Rapport annuel de l'ARCEP sur l'état d'internet en France

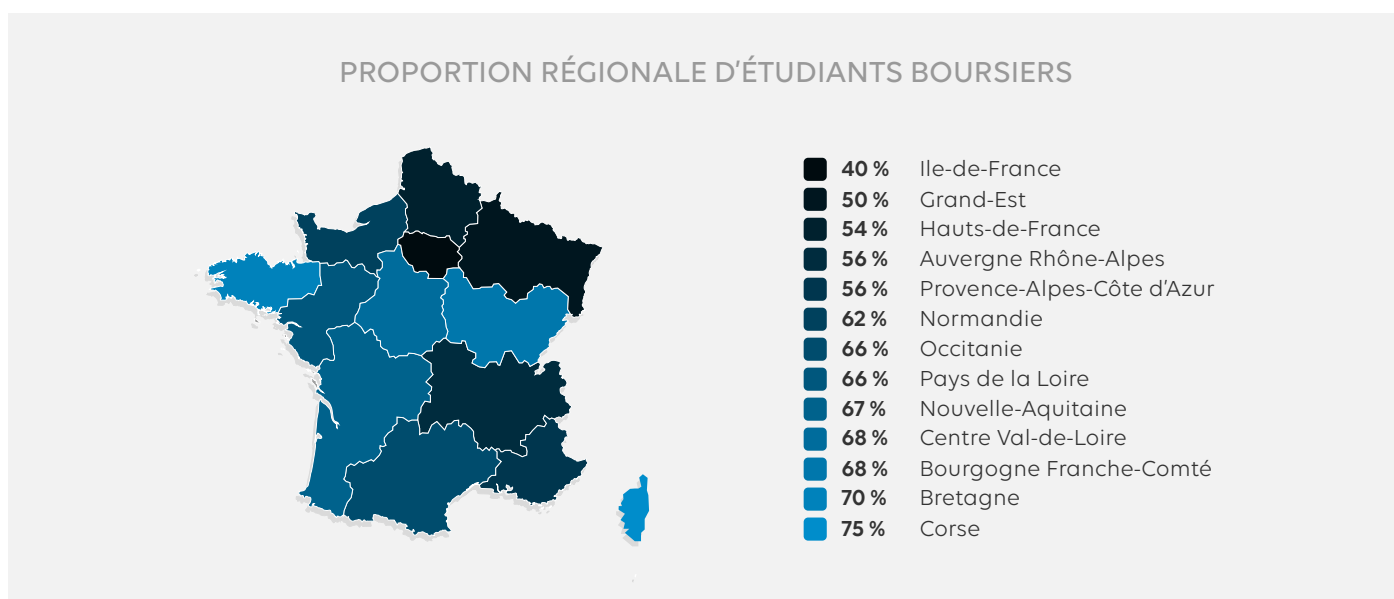
2/ SPECIFIC REGIONAL FEATURES



Although spread across the 4 corners of France, a large proportion of students live in the Paris region (17%) and Auvergne Rhônes-Alpes (16%). This geography is in line with the various surveys, since Ile-de-France alone accounts for more than a quarter of those enrolled in higher education (26.5%) . The Lyon metropolitan area is France's second largest higher education area, with more than 175,000 students (including 23,000 international students) and 11,500 researchers and teacher-researchers.

There are also major regional differences among the 59% of students receiving grants: there are more in Corse and Bretagne, despite the large student population in Ile-de-France.

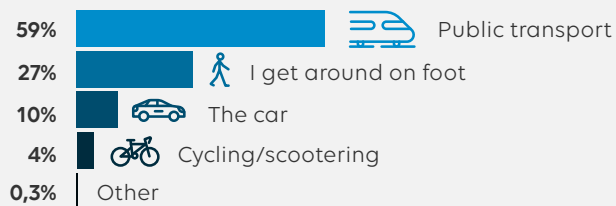
Apolline DUMAR points out that the 40% figure for the Ile-de-France can be justified by the fact that students will tend to prefer regions that are more affordable and/or have a greater number of social housing units per student.



⁵ <https://www.lesechos.fr/politique-societe/societe/la-france-compte-3-millions-detudiants-1780209>

⁶ <https://www.lyon.fr/enfance-et-education/education/lyon-ville-etudiante>

WHAT MODE OF TRANSPORT DO YOU MAINLY USE?

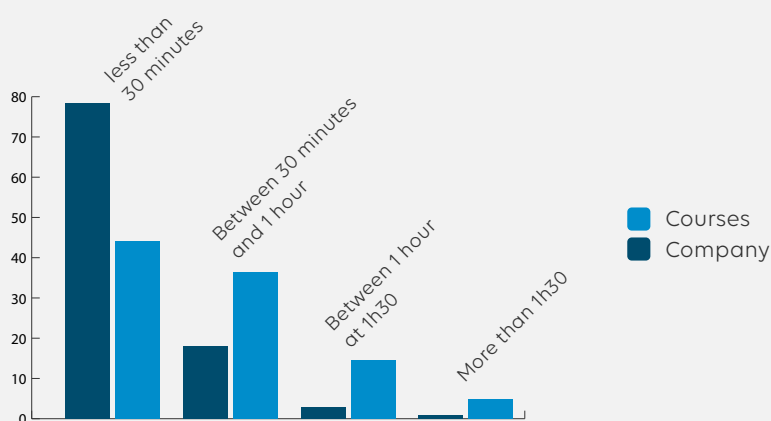


59% of respondents say they use public transport in their daily lives.

We tried to relate this information to the area in which they live. We found that car use was higher in Corsica (31%) and Centre Val de Loire (14%), cycling was higher in Grand Est (7%) and Occitanie (7%), while public transport was used a lot in Ile-de-France (78%). It all makes sense, really. In major cities, public transport makes it easier for students to get around. Because the network is extensive and trains are regular. On the other hand, when you live outside the big cities, there is little public transport and you have to manage on your own.

90% of respondents are satisfied with the location of their accommodation. What's more, 78% of students take less than 30 minutes to get to class. This figure can be explained by the location of the residences, as close as possible to the place of study, particularly for CROUS residences, which are mainly located on campuses (nearly 70% of respondents)

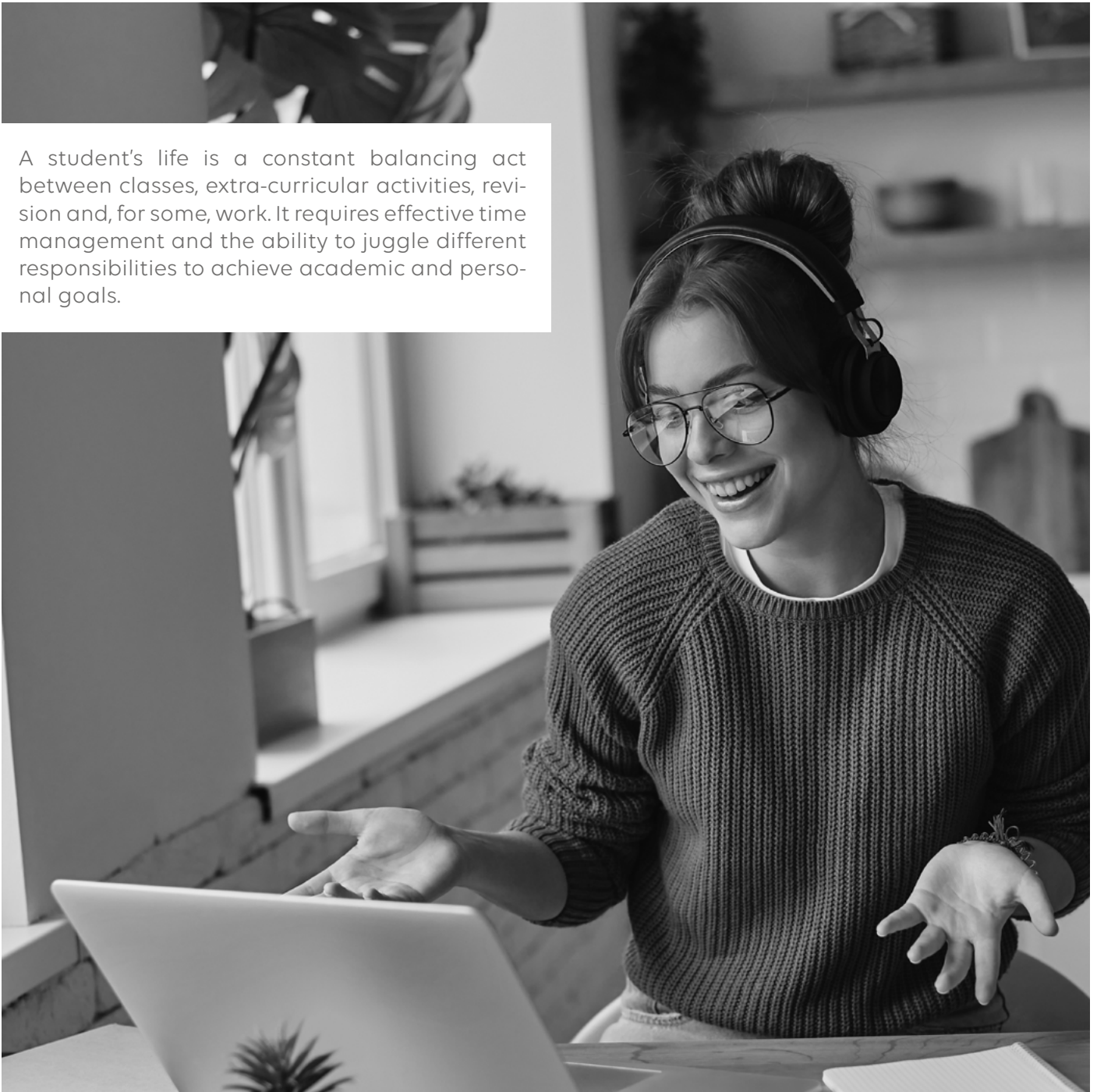
HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE YOU TO GET TO SCHOOL AND TO WORK?



02

DIVING INTO A VARIED DAILY LIFE

A student's life is a constant balancing act between classes, extra-curricular activities, revision and, for some, work. It requires effective time management and the ability to juggle different responsibilities to achieve academic and personal goals.



KEY POINTS

- 72% of those surveyed no longer take distance learning courses.
- 80% of respondents do not have a student job in addition to their studies. The remaining percentage work all year round, mainly at weekends, and half earn less than €400 a month.
- Students prefer to study alone (83%) and in their own accommodation (95%).

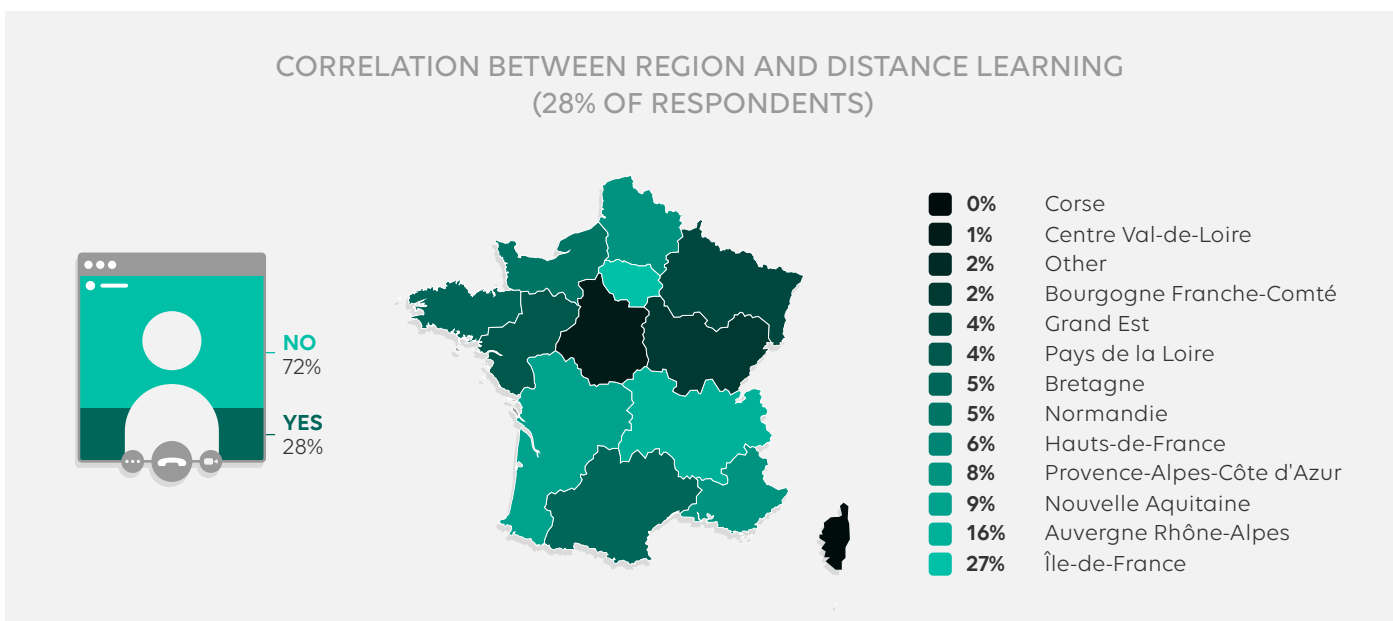
1/ HYBRID COURSES, ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

Distance learning courses appeared suddenly at the time of the health crisis, and then the hybrid format quickly became the norm. But three years later, **72% of students say that they no longer take distance learning courses**, even though 73% of them believe that distance learning methods have changed. Does this mean that we reached the limits of the model?

One of the advantages of distance learning is its flexibility, for example the ability to record course sessions, allowing students to review lessons over and over again. This can be particularly interesting for those who need to learn at their own pace or who have difficulty taking notes. However, nothing beats face-to-face exchanges to enrich a debate for some. And it is this lack of interaction between students and teaching staff that is encouraging schools to do away with virtual classes.

« There is a digital divide, particularly in relation to the Internet. This can create inequalities, particularly for the most disadvantaged students who don't have access to good Internet. At the FAGE, we are in favour of re-establishing face-to-face classes to re-establish the social link between students and teachers. »

Apolline DUMAR, Vice-President of Social Affairs, FAGE



Nevertheless, distance learning is continuing in some areas, particularly in the Ile-de-France region. Should this be linked to the social context linked to pension reform?

There were no fewer than 11 days of strikes between January and April 2023. Some schools have also chosen to offer distance learning on strike days so as not to penalise students living in the Paris suburbs in particular. One example is the Galileo Global Education group, which has made this choice for its 18 schools: «After a few days of use, a satisfaction survey was sent to students and lecturers. The feedback was very positive, with 95% of students and 96% of lecturers saying that it was a good idea to set up virtual classes to deal with the transport problems caused by strikes».

⁷ Chiffres des mobilisations contre la réforme des retraites depuis le 19/01/2023 (mise à jour du 11-04-23) – CFDT UFETAM, (s. d.). CFDT UFETAM - CFDT – Union Fédérale de l'Environnement des Territoires. <https://www.cfdt-ufetam.org/chiffres-des-mobilisations-contre-la-reforme-des-retraites-depuis-le-19-janvier-2023/>

⁸ Esgci. (2020, 3 novembre). Article headline. ESGCI, l'Ecole de Commerce International et Marketing - Paris. <https://www.esgci.com/actus/greve-mise-en-place-de-cours-distance#:~:text=Gr%C3%A2ce%20au%20logiciel%20Blackboard%20Collaborate,%C3%A0%2018%20%C3%A9coles%20du%20groupe>

Testimonies : what is your opinion on distance learning courses?



« Teachers need to learn how to use the different tools that their equipment offers, there are still many who don't try out the different options that could be useful to them, and then quite simply teachers need to remain dynamic even if they're in front of a screen so that we don't fall asleep ».

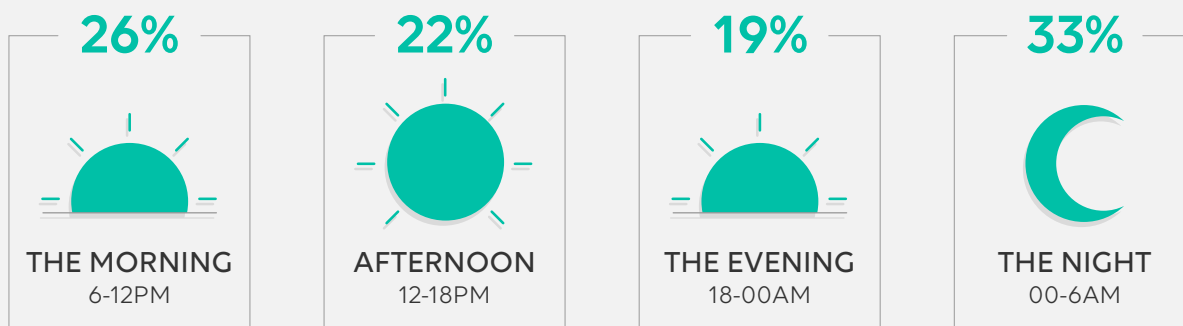
«Not having any. This type of training doesn't suit me at all, it makes me fall behind in of my studies».

«the length of the distance learning courses, a whole day of distance learning courses is a lot”

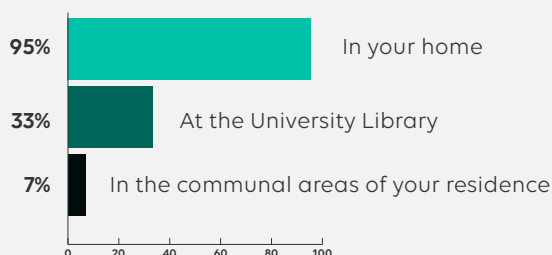
2/ STUDIES, WORK AND MANAGEMENT OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students spend a lot of their time on homework and revision. Our respondents say that they prefer to study in the evening. This is in keeping with the idea of a social life after classes and a return to the quiet that is conducive to homework.

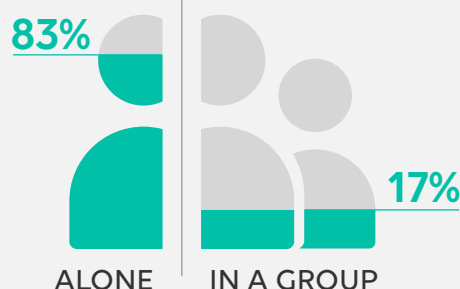
OUTSIDE CLASS, WHEN DO YOU PREFER TO STUDY?



WHERE DO YOU STUDY?



YOU PREFER TO STUDY:



Students prefer to study alone (83%) and in their own accommodation (95%). In our first survey, focusing on students' internet habits in 2020, 72% of them already said they preferred to study in their accommodation.

« It's impressive! It completely contradicts the data we collected last year in our survey. Students spend at least 5 hours a day in their accommodation. After that, it's a reflection of today's society, with Deliveroo and Netflix evenings to top off of the day. »

Philippe CAMPINCHI, General Delegate of AIREs

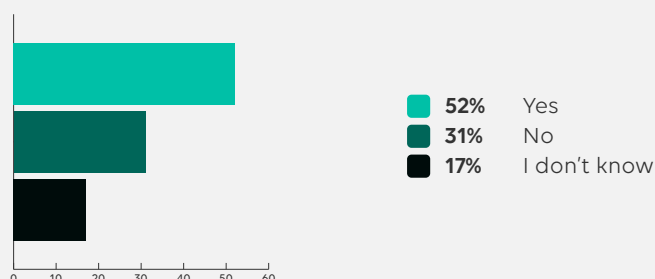
The traditional university library comes second (31%), followed by communal areas in the halls of residence (7%). This last figure might lead us to think that communal areas are not very common in halls of residence. This is why we asked whether the residences had set up this type of space for group work. The response was 52% 'yes' and 31% 'no', with the remaining 17% not knowing whether their residence had this type of study space.

We can also simply understand that **working from home is the least restrictive option in terms of timetabling.** On the subject of group work, when it's not imposed, it's not popular with students.

« I've seen a lot of communal spaces in the halls of residence, both formal and informal, but all very friendly. However, it's hard to get away from the solitary side of things because the students are all hooked on their smartphones. »

Philippe CAMPINCHI, General Delegate of AIREs

DO YOU HAVE COMMUNAL AREAS FOR STUDYING IN YOUR RESIDENCE?



⁹ [https://www.wifirst.com/hubfs/Ressources/Enque%CC%82te%20internet%20et%20le%20e%CC%81tudiants%20\(Avril%202021\).pdf](https://www.wifirst.com/hubfs/Ressources/Enque%CC%82te%20internet%20et%20le%20e%CC%81tudiants%20(Avril%202021).pdf)

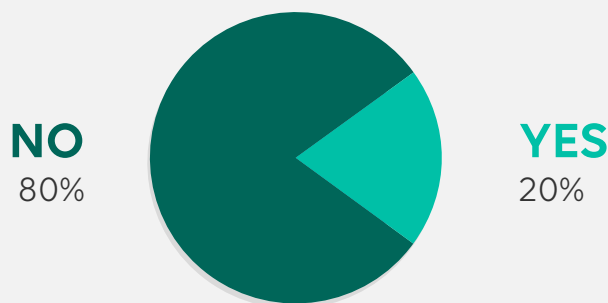
¹⁰ http://www.aires.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CP_AIRES-sondage301122-2.pdf

Although the 2021 survey by the National Observatory of Student Life reports that 40% of students enrolled in higher education work alongside their studies, **80% of respondents say that they do not work outside their studies** (71% of foreign students). The observatoire's mission is to provide as complete, detailed and objective information as possible on the living conditions of students and their relationship with the course of studies, to inform political and social thinking and to assist in decision-making. This can be explained by the number of students receiving grants and the age of the respondents.

« Many of the respondents were students in Crous residences. In general, priority students in Crous residences are often grant holders and receive the highest level of grant. These students are able to benefit from double support with social assistance, so they don't necessarily need a job alongside their studies. Of course, this does not mean that these young people are not affected by job insecurity. What we're seeing with the FAGE is that it's often students who aren't entitled to a grant or other assistance who turn to a student job. »

Apolline DUMAR, Vice-President of Social Affairs, FAGE

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO WORK WHILE STUDYING



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WORKING, BY AGE

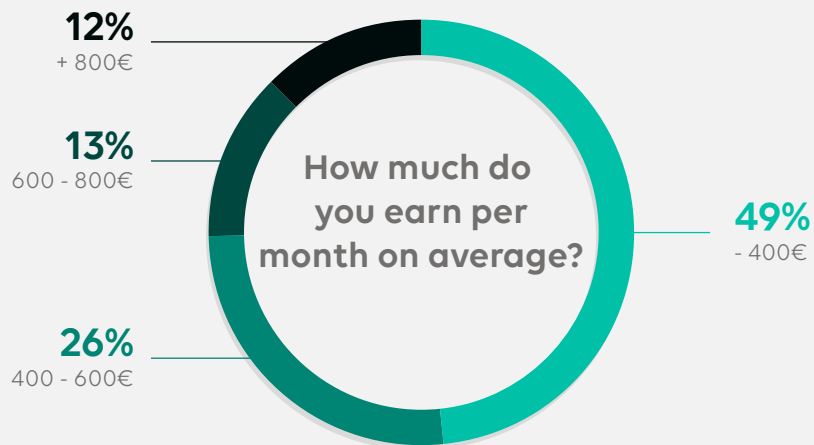
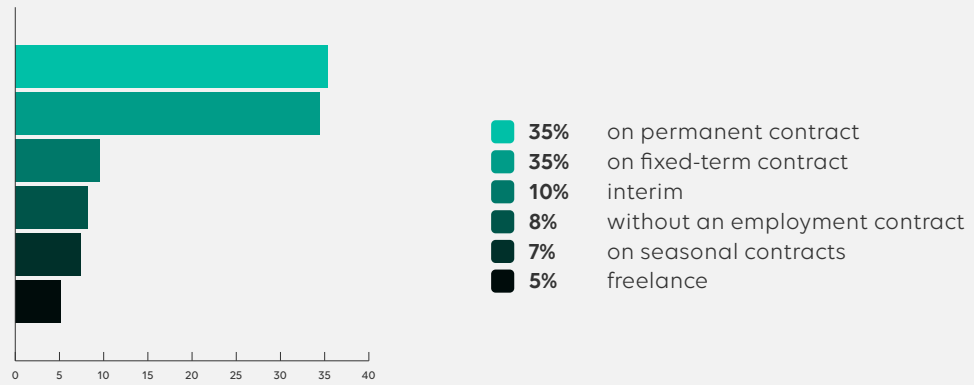


If we look at those who have a job outside their studies, we find that they work all year round, mainly weekends, and earn less than 400€. The majority have permanent contracts (35%) and fixed-term contracts (35%), but 8% have no employment contract.

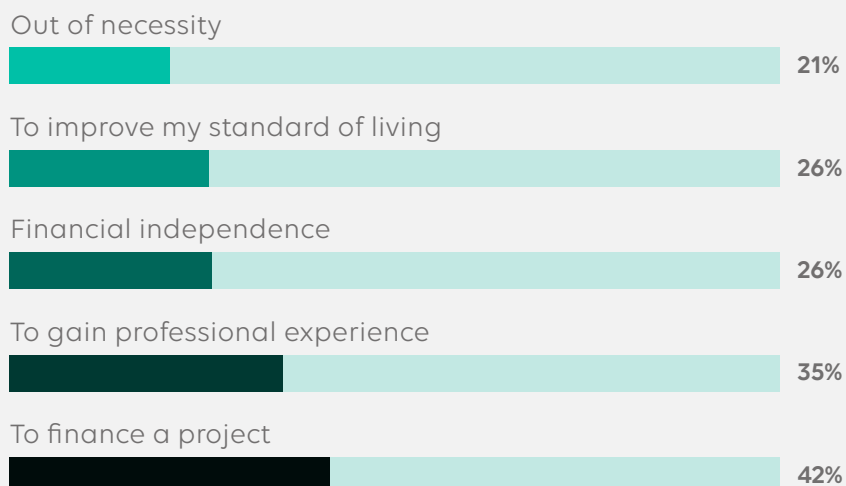
« It's quite worrying because working without a contract means that they're not protected, they don't pay contributions and they're not covered by insurance... »

Apolline DUMAR, Vice-President of Social Affairs, FAGE

YOU ARE AN EMPLOYEE

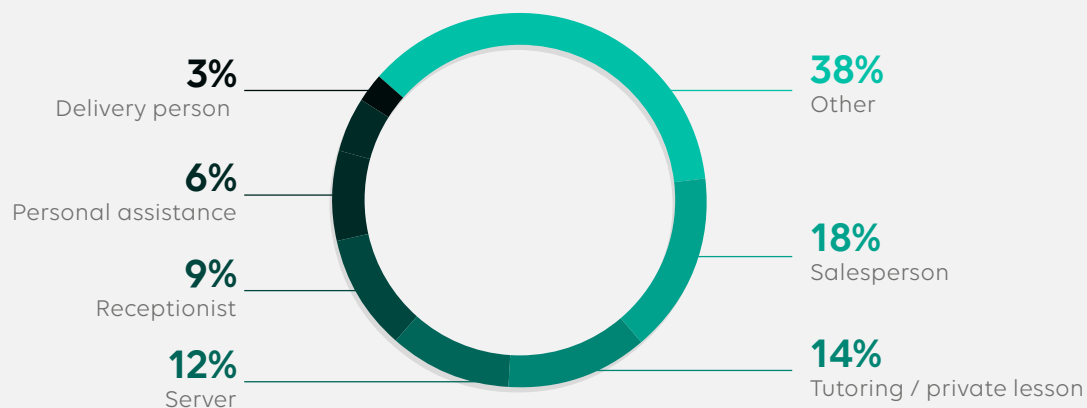


WHAT WAS YOUR MAIN MOTIVATION FOR WORKING ALONGSIDE YOUR STUDIES?

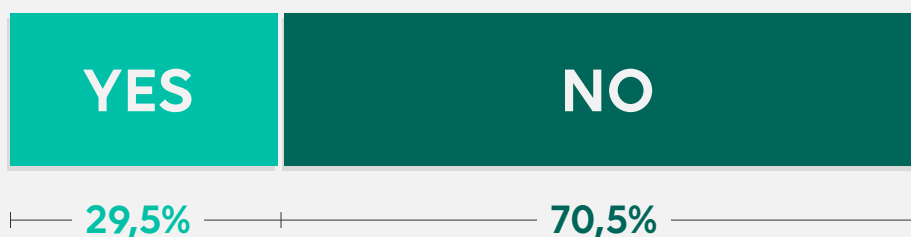


Students show us that they work in a variety of fields! On the other hand, working is a necessity to support themselves, which explains why it is not necessarily linked to their studies (70% of respondents).

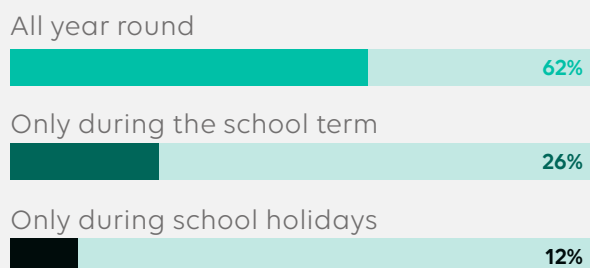
THE MAIN STUDENT JOBS



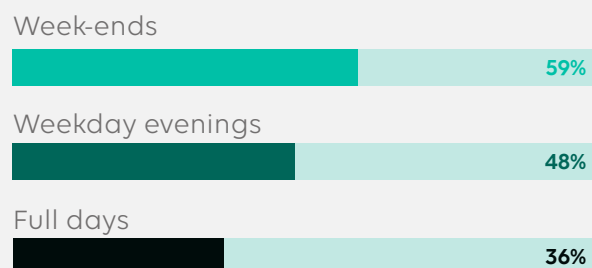
IS YOUR STUDENT JOB RELATED TO YOUR STUDIES?



YOU WORK:

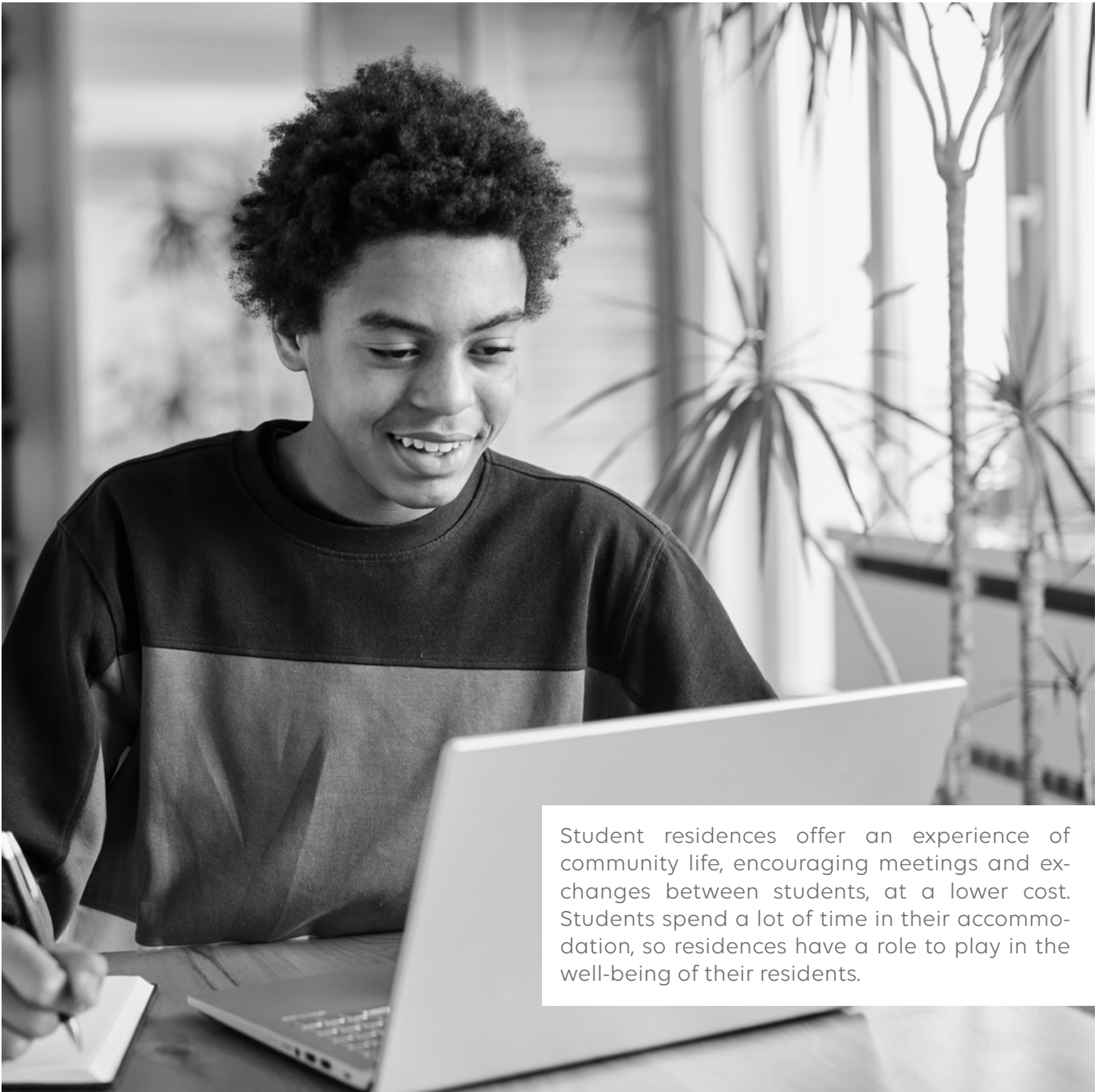


HOW ARE YOUR WORKING HOURS SPREAD OVER THE WEEK?



03

HOUSING CENTRAL TO STUDENT WELL-BEING



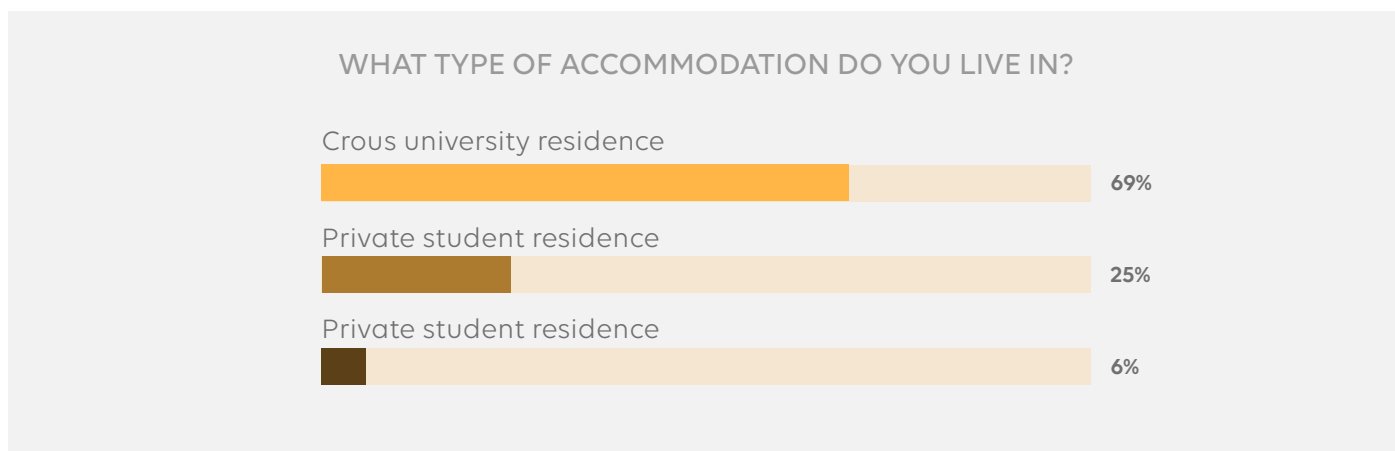
Student residences offer an experience of community life, encouraging meetings and exchanges between students, at a lower cost. Students spend a lot of time in their accommodation, so residences have a role to play in the well-being of their residents.

KEY POINTS

- Of the students surveyed, 69% live in a Crous residence, 25% in an approved private residence and 6% in a non-approved private residence.
- The top 3 expectations of students are accessibility, safety and cleanliness, ahead of connectivity and student life.
- The top 3 in terms of facilities: a fully-equipped, furnished flat with kitchenette, high-performance, unlimited WiFi and laundry facilities.

Leaving home to pursue their studies is a choice that many students make every year. Moving to a new town, region or country is no obstacle, even if young people are confronted with the reality of the property market.

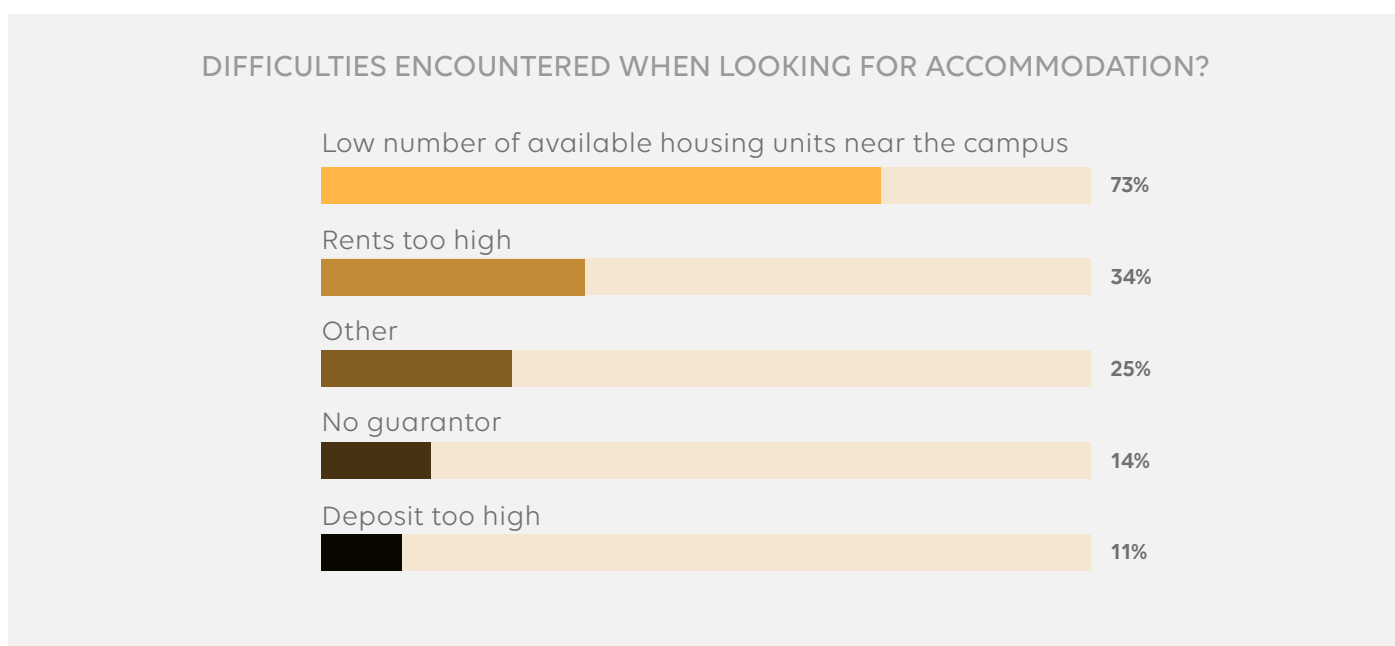
1/ ACCESS TO HOUSING



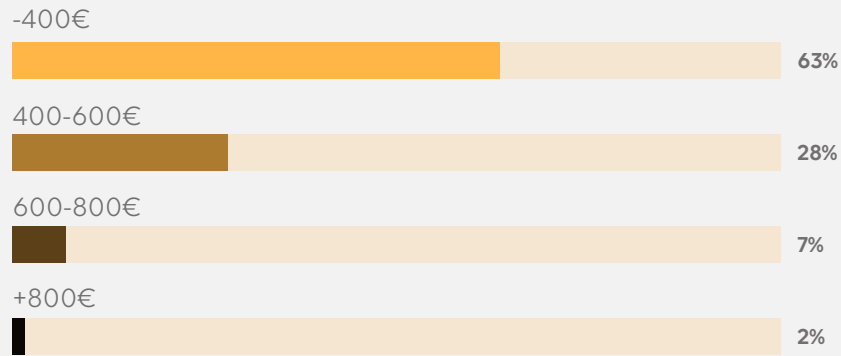
Correlation between education and type of residence :

	Private student residence	Private student residence	Crous university residence
Other	27%	7%	66%
Private higher education	51%	10%	39%
100% online training	31%	19%	50%
University	19%	5%	77%

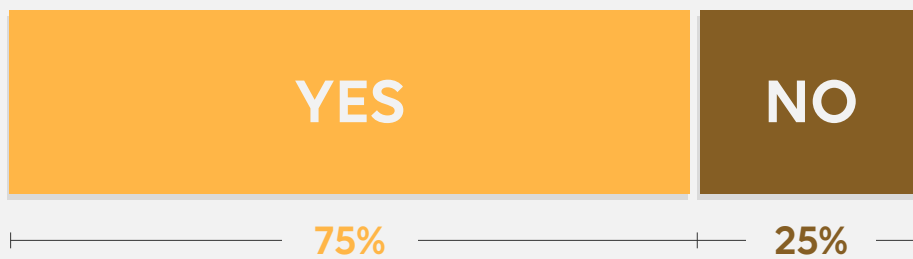
Of those surveyed, 69% live in Crous accommodation. 27% of respondents had difficulty finding accommodation (72% of foreign students). 75% of them pay less than 400€ because they receive social assistance to pay their rent. They receive social assistance to pay their rent.



DO YOU RECEIVE WELFARE BENEFITS TO HELP YOU PAY YOUR RENT?



DO YOU RECEIVE WELFARE BENEFITS TO HELP YOU PAY YOUR RENT?



2/ RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

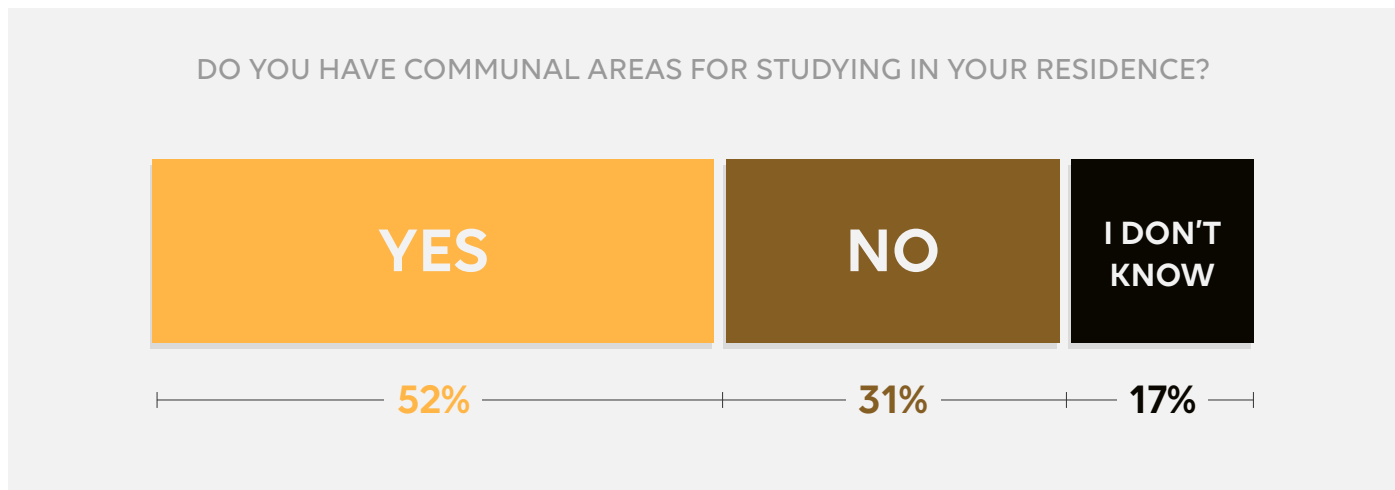
When it comes to facilities, students are looking for residences that offer modern, functional facilities. We asked them to rank the facilities in order of preference: **a furnished, fully- equipped flat with a kitchenette, high-performance, unlimited WiFi, followed by the availability of a laundry.**

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIALS IN A RESIDENCE?

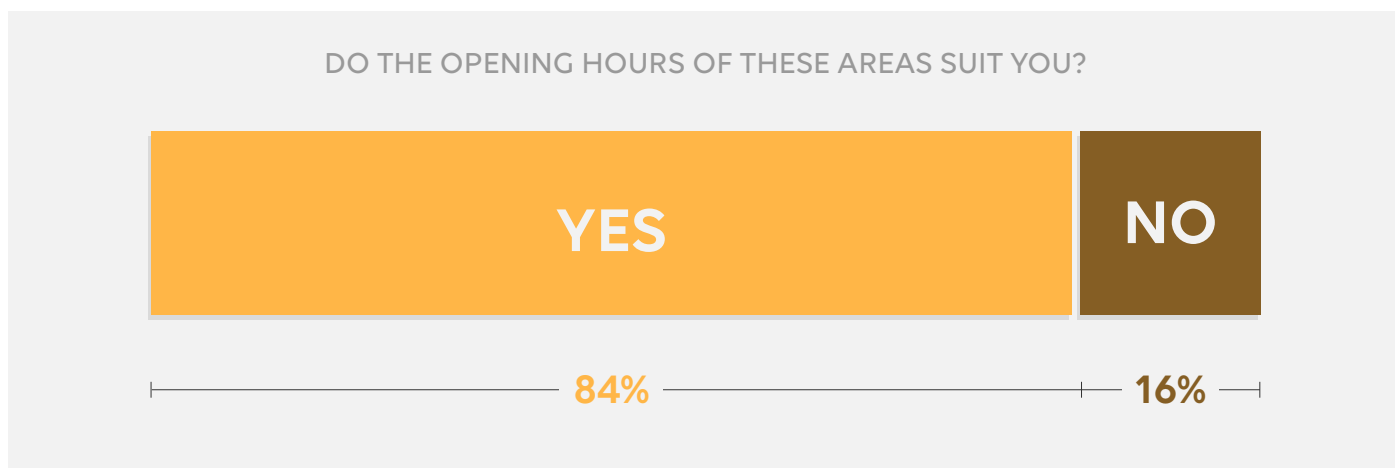
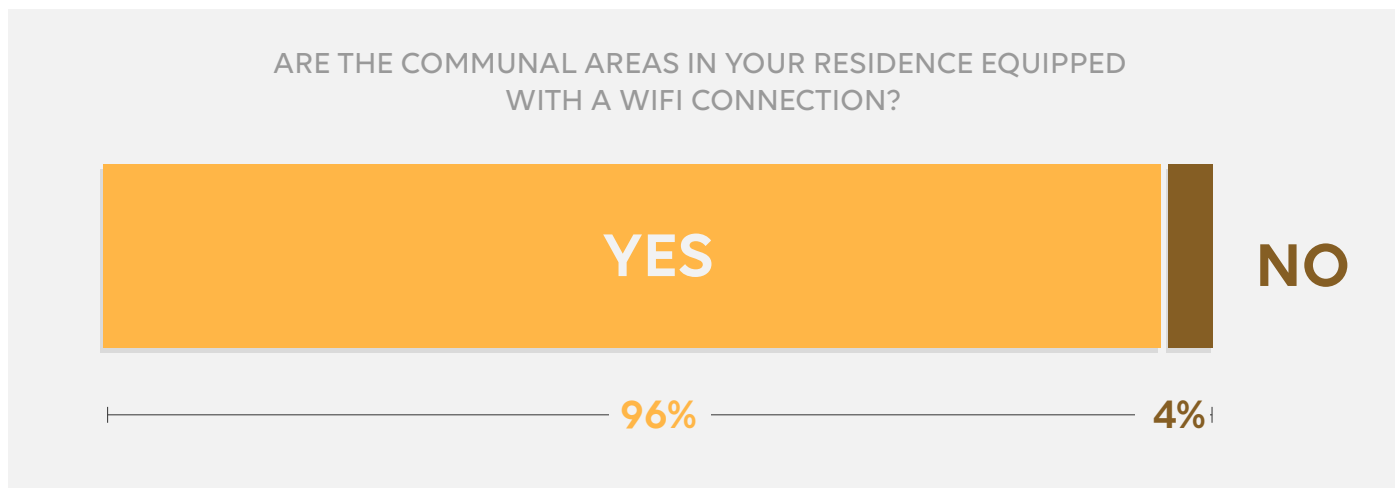


A central part of a residence's offering is the provision of communal areas. These play a central role in creating a dynamic community, and while they help residents to flourish in their homes, they also represent a substantial investment for operators. Indeed, according to the Fnaim (Fédération nationale de l'immobilier) index, on July, 1st 2023, the price per square metre is estimated at 10,393€ in Paris. To illustrate the point, a sports hall requires a minimum of 150 square metres. Based on these two figures, it's clear that not all residences can offer state-of-the-art communal areas with a gym, rooftop and communal outdoor space...

However, 52% of respondents say they have communal study areas in their residences.

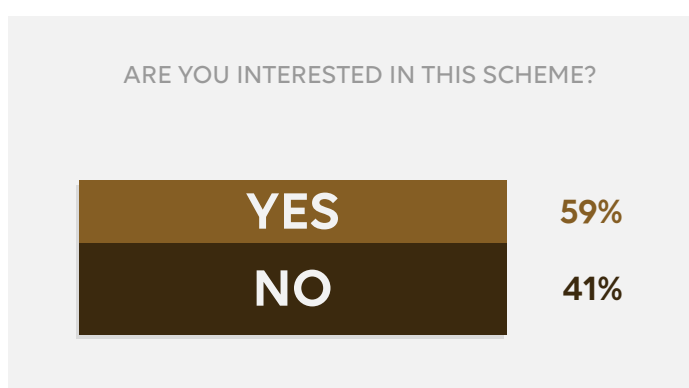
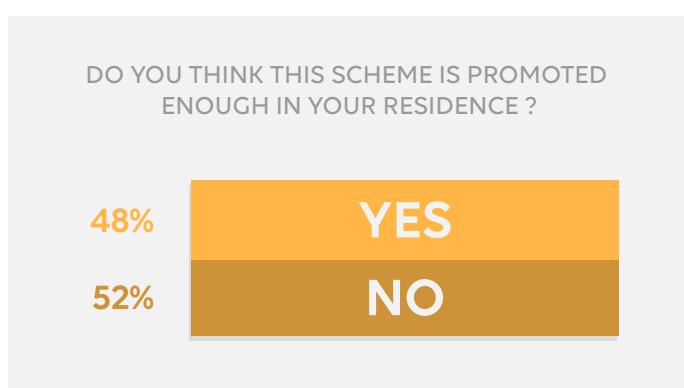
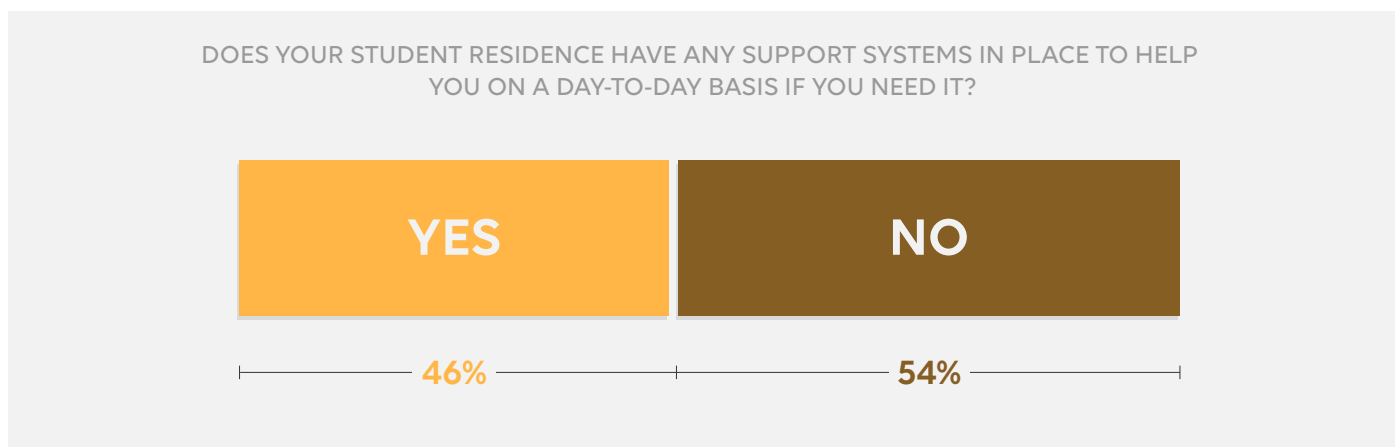


These common areas are of course equipped with a WiFi connection and have opening times that are 84% convenient for students.



¹² Quelle surface pour une salle de sport ? Combien de m2 ? (s. d). Modelesdebusinessplan.com. <https://modelesdebusinessplan.com/blogs/infos/surface-salle-sport>

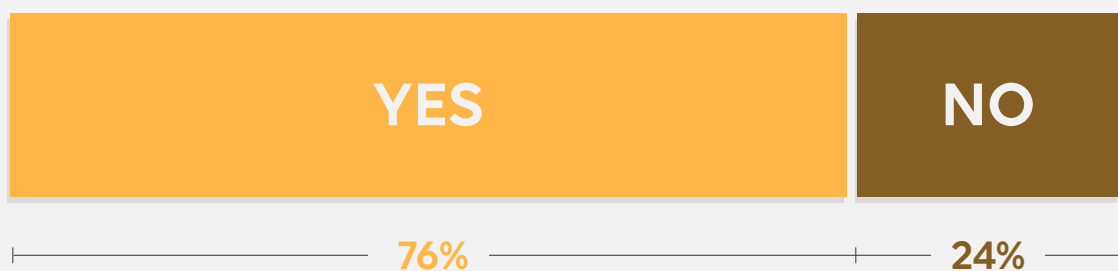
Students also appreciate the presence of support services, although we note that more than half of students (54%) do not benefit from a support system in their residence. This suggests that support services, as well as residence managers and security teams, help to create a safe and reassuring environment for students.



We asked students about their «residence essentials». If we rank their expectations, the top 3 are accessibility, safety and cleanliness. **76% of students felt that their expectations corresponded to reality.**

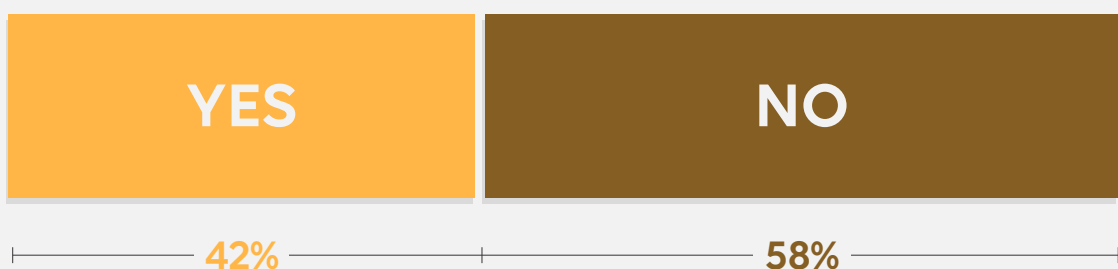


ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS CONSISTENT WITH REALITY?



Increasingly, students are also sensitive to sustainability and expect environmentally-friendly residences, with green initiatives such as waste management or the use of renewable energy.

IS ECO-CONSTRUCTION/RESPONSIBLE BUILDING A FACTOR IN YOUR CHOICE OF RESIDENCE?



The residence of their dreams would be more respectful of the environment, more modern, more secure, with ultra-efficient WiFi, laundry rooms equipped with state-of-the-art washing machines and dryers... Above all, students need adequate private space to **ensure their individual comfort and well-being in order to succeed in their studies.**

Testimonials: the ideal residence...



«A residence with a bed, a desk to work on, a table for eating, a fridge, a kitchenette, storage, a toilet and shower in the flat and laundry facilities in the residence.»

«a residence close to key locations (supermarket, town centre, sports facilities), easy to park, eco-responsible.»

«A residence that offers many services (gym, university restaurant, etc...) that are permanently accessible for residents.»

«A low rent, a room that's not very big but well laid out (with just the essentials) and practical storage units that make the most of the space in the room, wifi that works well at all times, same for hot water and the residence is well located (close to the campus and close to public transport). All the options such as a gym, relaxation room, video games room, etc. are not necessarily useful and increase the rent for nothing. On the other hand, a manager who is available and responsive is essential.»

«A residence in which the accommodation is furnished with a kitchenette including an oven. Good internet connection. Close to the place of study. Clean and secure. Ideally, I would have liked a gym and a music room (piano and guitar). And finally, a decent rent, adapted to students' means and with utilities included.»

In their definition of an «ideal residence», Apolline Dumar points out we can see that students are already idealising a residence with the bare essentials: a bed, a desk, a kitchenette, Wi-Fi and hot water. Once again, these comments show that, despite the interest that students may have in eco-responsibility, social necessities remain a priority, which is only human.

While students don't have the luxury of being able to make this a priority, it is another reminder that environmental issues must be at the heart of landlords' priorities.

CONCLUSION

Entering student life is a busy and challenging time, whether it's finding accommodation, choosing your preferred course of study, gaining your first work experience, managing your budget or simply discovering life in a community. Our study shows that finding the right balance between individual commitments, social life and schooling is not always easy. For all that, the support systems seem solid. The participants in our survey consider access to housing to be straightforward overall, and the majority of financial aid schemes enable them to concentrate on their studies rather than juggling different roles.

Can this be linked to the solidarity plan set up for the most vulnerable students? A 4% increase in scholarships based on social criteria, a 3.5% increase in APL, an exceptional back-to-school grant of 100 euros... Numerous initiatives have been implemented for the start of the 2022 academic year.

Our discussions with Apolline Dumar (FAGE) also helped us to understand that there was a gap between students on grants and other students, who are often far from being financially well-off for so many reasons...

In terms of Internet usage and awareness of responsible digital use, the feedback is in line with our previous observations. Digital technology is increasingly seen as a means of opening up to the world, even if this means widening the gaps in access to the Internet.

So how can those involved in student accommodation do their bit to promote a fair balance in the lives of their residents?

Gathering feedback from the main stakeholders, we can see that the key is an environment conducive to personal and academic development, with the right balance between integration into a community and the resources allocated to ensure a certain standard and services dedicated to personal development.



