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**Centre Régional des Œuvres
universitaires et Scolaires**

FRENCH GOVERNEMENT RESPONSES TO THE STUDENT HOUSING CRISIS

Wednesday, July 8, 2026 – Parallel Sessions 1.1

Sophie ROUSSEL, Managing Director Crous de Strasbourg

European Student Affairs Conference 2026 – Kiel

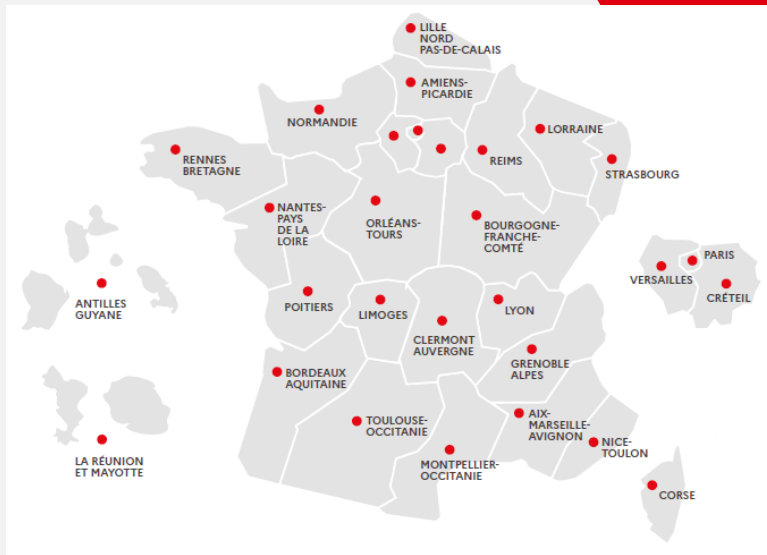
CNOUS & CROUS : ABOUT US

Cnous & the 26 Crous established in 1955

The Cnous is a French public administration agency responsible for social assistance, international student reception, student housing, student dining services and student cultural life. The Cnous and 26 regional Centers are organized as a network lead by the Cnous.



815 student residences
174,691 available housing units
88.4% of occupancy rate



MAJOR CHALLENGES IN FRANCE

 **Rising Student Population.** Expansion in higher education (nb of students, duration of studies) pressuring housing availability in major French cities. + **75.5%** over the past 35 years, rising from 1.7 M° students in the 1990s to 3 M° students in the 2024–2025 academic year. Slight decline from 2034 onwards

 **Housing Cost Challenges.** High rents and regional disparities, increasing reliance on family support. Average rent : **576 €/ month**

 **Diverse Student Finances.** Student financial resources vary : family support, employment (44% of students are employed during the academic year, excluding summer break– OVE 2023), need-based student grants

 **Housing Market Pressure.** Intense competition in metropolitan areas among students and other groups for limited rental housing

ROLE OF CROUS IN STUDENT HOUSING

Crous Housing Contribution. Crous manage nearly 50% of France's purpose built student housing with around 180 000 units in 2023

Demand and Supply Imbalance. Only 7% of students live in Crous residences, causing long waiting lists and high demand for limited housing

Impact of Private Rental Market. ~ 90% of students rely on the private market where rents are higher and living conditions vary widely

Crous Social and Environmental Role. Crous support student by welfare policies relying on a integrated social and environmental approach --> Supporting student mental health and combatting student isolation.



Ambitious Student Housing Targets – Mid term planning

- Housing Supply Expansion : + 45 000 housing units by 2027, + 75 000 housing units (construction and renovation) by 2030
- Quality and Sustainability



Governance & Coordination

- **Interministerial task force** bringing together national stakeholders, co-chaired by the Ministers for Housing and Higher Education. Simplify complex procedures. Technical support on financial and legal matters
- **Regional road maps** and **regional steering committees** chaired by « Préfet » : set territorial targets, identify land opportunities, support

MAIN CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



Construction Constraints and Affordability Issues

- Rising construction and renovation costs
- Land scarcity and competition for available sites



Environmental Challenges

- Energy efficiency, reduce carbon footprint
- Maintaining thermal comfort in summer and winter
- Modernising ageing buildings



Financial Challenges

- Declining public funding resources

ADRESSING THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGE

Maintaining affordability and financial balance for operators

- 1 Public Funding.** State subsidies and local contributions. Projet-Based Funding Opportunities (Plan de relance, plan de résilience, etc.)
- 2 Crous Self-Financing and Borrowing.** In 2025, €22.9 billion of loans granted for social housing and urban policy. € 550 million dedicated to student housing. CROUS benefited from 11% of this envelope.
- 3 Leveraging European Funding.** Attempt to access to FEDER indirect grants (European Regional Development Fund) to support construction, major refurbishment and energy-efficient renovation : Normandie, Lille, Paris.
- 4 Devellopping Innovative Public Procurement and Contracting Models** (design-build-operate contracts, global performance contracts, public-private partnership arrangements)

ADDRESSING THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGE

A Strategic Partnership: CDC & CROUS

The **Caisse des Dépôts Group (CDC)** is France's leading public long-term investor dedicated to serving the public interest.

2025–2030 Partnership

Construction and renovation of **more than 50,000 housing units**
Projet of a Real Estate Holding Company: CNOUS – CROUS – CDC

The Role of Banque des Territoires : Sharing expertise, Supporting regional stakeholder networks, Accelerating project delivery, Promoting innovative territorial initiatives, Projet engineering

AGiLE Programme : **€5 billion investment program** supporting project engineering, feasibility studies, investment projects.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION #1 : DENSIFICATION

Paradin Residence (Lyon) currently provides 340 housing units. A feasibility study has concluded that the site allows for increased density and has identified a combination of partial demolition, rehabilitation, and new construction as the best approach.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Minimum of 440 student places
- Proposed scenario:
 - 170 places renovated
 - 170 places demolished and rebuilt
 - 100 new places created



INNOVATIVE SOLUTION #2 : VERTICAL EXPANSION

Building Elevation. Adding extra floors to an existing residence to maximize housing capacity without expanding urban sprawl. Increase of the Property Value

Comprehensive renovation. Upgrading aging buildings (plumbing, electrical systems, accessibility) increases availability and improves energy efficiency and comfort for students

Enhancing Common Spaces and Accessibility. Increasing the building's floor area allows redesigning common areas, improving accessibility and integrating new student services (sports, coworking, music hall, laundry, etc...)

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION #2 : VERTICAL EXPANSION



Village 1 – Pessac, Crous de Bordeaux, © Atelier Mazières Architectes Associés - 2024

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION #3 : SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

Net Positive Energy Buildings. Generates more energy than the building consume, supporting climate and decarbonation goals.

Advanced Energy System. Advanced insulation, energy consumption management systems, digital monitoring

Sustainable Construction Practices. Materials and construction methods focuses on lowering carbon footprint, reuse of construction materials

Lowering operating cost. Lowering energy bills and potentially selling excess energy back to the grid



Cité'U Boutonnet – Crous Montpellier, © HSP Architectes –



Crous de Lille – Kromos'Home Residence



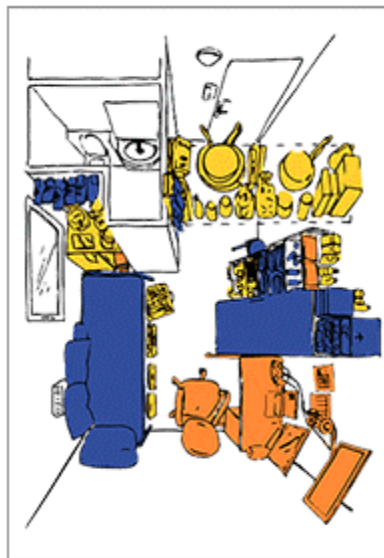
INNOVATIVE SOLUTION #4 : USER-CENTERED DESIGN

Student-Centered Approach. Ensuring that spaces are not only adapted to current needs, but also sustainable and scalable according to student usage.

Supportive Living Environments. Questioning the division between intimate spaces and shared spaces. Designing living spaces where students feel at home.

Creation of a Research Chair focused on student living conditions with the *École des Arts Décoratifs* (French Design School) :

Making User-Centred Design a **Standard Practice** in all projects.



CROUS ACHIEVEMENTS IN ADRESSING STUDENT HOUSING

Nb of housing units	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Built	1373	1 409	1 430	1 219	5 431
Refurbished	3 514	3 574	1 070	1 161	9 319

Cnous Annual Investment Budget	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Housing	34,7 M€	56,5 M€	70,6 M€	72,8 M€	234,6 M€
TOTAL	80,2 M€	85,3 M€	108,4 M€	105 M€	378,9 M€

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

