

# COUNTRY GUIDE: FRANCE

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Immigration Practice

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Before working in France, nationals of certain countries may be required to apply for a visa. In this guide, we explore who needs a visa to work in France, and look at the work permit options available.

## FRENCH EMPLOYMENT VISAS

All EU citizens can work in France without requiring a visa due to freedom of movement shared rights between member states. Those that do require a visa to work in France have several options available depending on the type of employment they are seeking to undertake in France.

## SCHENGEN VISAS

A Schengen visa is a short-stay visa which allows its holder to enter, freely travel within and leave any of the 26 Schengen member countries on a single permit. Find out more about Schengen visas [here](#).

## INTRA-CORPORATE TRANSFERS

Across most European member states there is a common work permit option known as Intra Corporate Transfer (ICT) which allows individuals to be transferred within company branches from one country to another. Find out more about the EU ICT Permit [here](#).

## EU BLUE CARD

The EU Blue Card is a work and residence permit for non-EEA nationals. The Blue Card gives highly qualified workers from outside the EU the permission to live and work in an EU country, provided they have high-level professional qualifications, and an offer of employment with a high salary. Find out more [here](#).

## THE TALENT PASSPORT PERMIT

The multi-year “passeport talent” residence permit was created to help foreign employees and self-employed persons develop France’s economic attractiveness. Under this category your employment contract and your stay in France must exceed three months.



The Talent Passport is a long-term visa or residence permit, renewable up to 4 years. It allows you (and potentially your family) to live and work in France. To apply, you must be a non-EEA national. This permit now includes the following ten categories:

- Skilled recent graduates
- Employees of an innovative company
- Highly skilled workers (Blue Card holders)
- Employees on a mission with a French work contract
- Researchers / scientists
- Champions of an innovative economic project
- Economic or financial investors
- Company representatives
- Artists / performers
- A person internationally or nationally renowned in science, literature, arts, education, sports etc.

This permit has varying requirements depending on which above category you fall into, but some general requirements are to:

- Provide documentation, often including a bachelor’s degree or higher, a detailed CV, information about the work, and evidence of sufficient funding.
- Show a work contract, typically for at least three months, approved by the DIRECCTE.
- Meet other criteria as set out by the Commission Nationale des Competences et Talents.

Family members get a *privée et familiale* card, allowing them to work legally in France.

## EMPLOYED OR SALARIED AND TEMPORARY WORKERS PERMIT

The company should submit the work permit application at least 3 months before the employee is due to take up their role. Before submitting the application, the employer must have attempted to find a candidate already in the French labour market. After 18 months in a long-stay residence permit marked employee or temporary worker, the individual may apply to bring their family to France.

## EMPLOYEES ON ASSIGNMENT PERMIT

If an individual has been working for at least 3 months in a company outside France and is seconded to one of their employer's companies based in France or another company in the same group, and will be earning 1.8 times the minimum wage (around €2,664 per month), then they are eligible to apply for this permit, which is valid for 3 years and then renewable. Their spouse can join them on this permit but cannot work until they've been in France for 6 months and have a *vie privée et familiale* permit. If the individual is a senior manager, then they can get a version of the permit that allows their family to come with them at the outset and for their spouse to work.

## SCIENTISTS / RESEARCHERS PERMIT

If an individual has a master's degree or above, and they are going to be carrying out research or teaching at university level, then they are eligible for temporary scientific activity residence permit (*carte de séjour temporaire 'mention scientifique'*). This is valid for 1 year and is renewable annually for up to 4 years. They must provide evidence of their status and duration of the research work, and also have a hosting agreement (*convention d'accueil*) from a scientific organization or university. Their spouse and family members are entitled to a residence permit marked *vie privée et familiale* (private and family life).

## SEASONAL WORKERS PERMIT

If an individual is employed with a seasonal contract lasting more than 3 months, they are eligible for a residence permit valid for 3 years, which is renewable for further -year periods. It allows the individual to work in seasonal employment for a maximum of 6 months out of every 12. The individual may only stay in France for 6 months each year, with normal residence outside of France, although they are allowed to have several contracts in succession, provided that they do not exceed 6 months out of 1 year in total.

## KEY POINTS FOR FRENCH WORK PERMITS

A work permit may take various forms. Some visas or residence permits which allow the holder to take up paid employment (such as the Talent Passport and the ICT permit) are equivalent to work permits and no additional steps are necessary in order to work in France under these categories. Other specific work permit categories must be requested by the employer before the worker arrives in France. These work permits are required in order to obtain a visa and a residence permit. As of April 6, 2021, applications for work permits to hire foreign employees can be submitted online via a dedicated portal.

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