Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
MINISTÈRE DE L'INTÉRIEUR
DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DES ÉTRANGERS EN FRANCE

Living in France

Preparing for your arrival in France

September 2016

The key values of French society and the Republic

Each year, France receives over 100,000 foreign nationals of third countries of the European Union from all over the world who wish to settle permanently in France.

France is a nation with thousands of years of history and a highly rich culture. France is synonymous with fundamental values to which the French are very attached.

Values exist in all countries and enable people to live together as a society: some are universal, common to all human beings, others are specific to the culture of a country and are the result of a nation's shared history. It is all the more important that people of different origins abide by these values so that they unite around shared rules.

These values are present in the motto of the French Republic: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. They also include secularism. They correspond to the principles that inform the laws which all individuals must abide by, including French citizens as well as any person living in or visiting France. The laws are adopted by the democratic institutions that are elected by the people. These institutions organise the relationship between the citizens and day-to-day life on the basis of these values and principles.

These are not simply abstract concepts: these values have concrete effects on day-to-day life by means of the rights and obligations of citizens and residents.

France places great importance on the quality of the welcome given to foreigners who want to settle permanently in its territory. This is why a personalised Republican integration process was designed. It enables everyone to incorporate in their own lives the rights and obligations that apply to everyone in France.

Modern France is the result of a long history and the events and choices made by the French people over time. Its form has been determined by the fight for the democratic values of liberty, equality and fraternity. France is also very attached to the principle of secularism, the framework for which was established by the law of 9 December 1905 regarding the separation of church and state.

These values are the foundation of all the laws and institutions that organise the life of the country. Respect of the law and civil society are essential to life as a group. The Republic guarantees the equality and rights of all people living in France. Rights cannot be detached from obligations because having rights. Thus, living in France means having rights as well as obligations.

✓ The values of France

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity are the values defined by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 26 August 1789. This document, on which the French Republic was founded, defines the rights and freedoms of each individual and upholds the principle of the equality of men and women, which is guaranteed by the Constitution of 1958. These values are the foundation of the Republic as well as French law, and are the source of rules which define rights, obligations and prohibitions.

Liberty
The fundamental freedoms are guaranteed: freedom of conscience, freedom of belief, freedom of expression, freedom to organise, freedom to marry, etc.
In the 1880s, the law guaranteed the freedom of the press. Public schooling became obligatory, and public school became free of charge and secular.

Equality
All citizens have the same rights and the same obligations regardless of their sex, origin, religion, opinions or sexual orientation. Women and men have the same rights and obligations in all respects.

Fraternity
France is founded on the desire of the French people to live together. France is a social Republic that guarantees solidarity, contributes to social cohesion and oversees the general interest. Workers enjoy rights that are guaranteed by the law and a social protection system counters the various risks that can occur in life.

Secularism

France is a secular nation that guarantees religious freedom and freedom of conscience. Secularism is the separation of church and state. The state is independent of any religion and does not support any religion. It is therefore neutral and does not fund any religion. This separation is necessary for freedom of conscience, i.e. belief, which the state protects. This means that provided the public order is not disturbed, the French state guarantees that every individual can practice any religion of their choice within the limits of the laws in force, can change religion, or have no religion. The practice of a religion is a part of private life, and every individual is free to believe or not to believe and to adopt any religion they choose.

✓ The French Republic

France is a republic, single and indivisible, consisting of a single territory, a single official language and laws that apply to all.

France currently consists of 13 regions, 101 departments and over 35,000 communes. Its territory includes both mainland France and eight overseas territories.

France is a democratic republic. Its principle is government of the people, by the people and for the people. Political leaders are elected by universal suffrage, which means that all citizens, both men and women, have the right to vote.

France is a state of law founded on laws that everyone, including the public authorities, must follow. The organisation of the state is defined by a text, the Constitution. Our current constitution is the constitution of the 5th Republic, and was adopted in 1958.

The independence of the judiciary is guaranteed.

Political parties can form and exercise their activity freely.

Our institutions are founded on the separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers.

Executive power
The President of the Republic is elected by universal suffrage for five years. He appoints the Prime Minister, who then appoints the members of the government on the basis of the President's proposals.

Legislative power
The Parliament, which consists of the National Assembly and the Senate, votes on the laws and controls the government. The deputies of the National Assembly are elected every five years in legislative elections, and senators are elected by indirect universal suffrage for a term of six years.

Judicial power
The judiciary is exercised by judges. It punishes violations of the law with imprisonment or other punishments provided for by the law. It settles disputes between individuals or companies and between citizens and the administration.

This booklet is intended for people who want to obtain a residence permit that will enable them to live permanently in France and sign a Republican Integration Contract[1].

This document, developed by the Ministry of the Interior (immigration management, assistance for immigrants and nationality) is just the first step of the integration process. It helps you to have a better understanding of how French society, which is founded on republican values, functions and is organised. In particular, it describes the formalities that need to be completed prior to your departure and the documents required for the procedures that need to be done once you arrive in France. The booklet also provides useful information about living in France in order to facilitate the integration of all and to share what unites everyone who lives in France, whether they are French or foreigners.

[1] This does not concern people who are not signatories to a Republican Integration Contract and particularly people who have a residence permit as a visitor, student, intern or employee on a temporary posting who have a 'highly skilled worker's permit' (article 1 of the law of 7 March 2016 regarding the rights of foreigners in France).

To learn more

- Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/Droit-francais/Constitution/Declaration-des-Droits-de-l-Homme-et-du-Citoyen-de-1789
- The law of 1905 on the separation of Church and State: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070169&dateTexte=20080306
- Constitution of the 5th Republic of 1958:

  http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958/preambule-de-la-constitution-du-27-octobre-1946.5077.html

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Before you leave

Getting a visa[2, 3]

There are two main categories of visa for foreigners from the third countries of the European Union:

- **Short-stay visas** (Schengen visa) for stays of no more than 90 days.
- **Long-stay visas** for stays in France of more than 90 days. If you are staying in France for more than 90 days, you will be issued with one of the two following visas:

	VLS-TS **Long-stay visa equivalent to residence permit**	**Other long-stay visas containing the statement *carte de séjour à solliciter* ('residence permit must be applied for')**
Where to apply for an e-visa	The relevant consulate in your country of residence or, in certain countries, the service provider responsible for receiving visa applications	
Duration of visa	One year maximum (you must arrive in France within three months following the issue date of your visa)	Three months
Procedures to carry out as soon as you arrive in France	Within three months of your arrival in France, you must send the form called *demande d'attestation OFII* that was given to you together with your visa to the *Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration* (French Immigration and Integration Office). Once confirmed by the OFII, the visa gives you the same rights as a residence permit.	Within two months of your arrival in France, you must apply for a residence permit from the prefecture of the department in which you live. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F16162

[2] The information below is intended for people who want to obtain a residence permit that will enable them to live permanently in France and sign a Republican Integration Contract.
[3] The information contained in this page is up to date with the current laws. They will change in accordance with the regulations that will become applicable in November 2016 under the law regarding the rights of foreigners in France of 7 March 2016.

	https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F39	
Fees	The administrative fee for a visa application depends on the type of visa and the nationality of the applicant. Certain applicants may be exempt from paying fees. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F18141	
Supporting documents	You must complete and sign a form and present your passport. If the remaining period of the validity of your passport is insufficient, your application will be refused. Other supporting documents may be required depending on the length and purpose of the visa you are applying for. Information about these supporting documents can be found at the website of any consulate. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F16163	

To learn more

- ⇨ http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/le-ministere-et-son-reseau/annuaires-et-adresses-du-maedi/ambassades-et-consulats-francais-a-l-etranger
- ⇨ http://accueil-etrangers.gouv.fr
- ⇨ http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/venir-en-france/formalites-d-entree-en-france/article/quel-type-de-visa-solliciter
- ⇨ http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/mentions-legales-infos-pratiques/faq/article/visas

Before you leave

Documents you need to bring with you to France

It is advisable to have all your personal documents with you as well as, if applicable, the personal documents of your family. Certain documents can be more difficult to obtain once you have left your country of origin.

Take the following with you, for example:

- Your birth certificate
- Your marriage or divorce certificate
- Your spouse's death certificate
- Your qualifications and degrees, etc.
- Reference letters from your former employers, evidence of your achievements, etc.
- Your vaccination records and medical records (prescriptions, results of clinical examinations, X-rays, etc.)
- Your driving licence.

Certifying and translating your documents

For all your administrative procedures, some documents[4] issued by a foreign office must be translated and certified before they can be presented to the French administration.

✓ Certification

Certification verifies the authenticity of a document and its signatures by the authorities of the issuing country.

Foreign documents can be certified:

- In your country of origin, with the French consulate or embassy.
- In France, with your consulate or embassy.

This procedure is necessary in order for the French administrative services to recognise the value of the certified document.

In order to be certified, the documents must be translated into French.

[4] For example, civil status documents, notarised certificates, court decisions, administrative certificates, etc.

✓ Translations

If your original documents are not in French, you will need to have them translated into French by an approved or certified translator. The certified translator must be approved by the Court of Cassation or the Courts of Appeal. The translator will certify that the translation is accurate and compliant with the original document by applying his or her stamp and signature. The cost of the translation is payable by you.

To learn more

- ⇨ Directory of sworn translators:
  http://www.annuaire-traducteur-assermente.fr
- ⇨ Documents which need to be certified:
  https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1402
- ⇨ Save your documents on-line with *la Poste*:
  http://www.laposte.fr/particulier/produits/presentation/digiposte/vos-donnees-securisees-a-vie

Customs procedures

Transporting your possessions when you settle in France.

Possessions transported from a third country to the European Union are generally subject to customs duties and tax.

However, in the case of personal possessions, it is possible to receive an exemption from duties and tax. In order for your possessions to be considered personal, and therefore exempt from customs duties and tax, the following requirements must be met:

- You need to have stayed in the third country for at least 12 consecutive months.
- You must transport your possessions to France within 12 months of the date of your change of residence.
- You need to have used these possessions for personal purposes for at least six months prior to your change of residence.

You cannot dispose (sale or rental, loan, pledge, etc.) of your possessions that have been admitted into France duty-free within the first 12 months of their date of entry into France.

The exemption excludes alcoholic products, tobacco and tobacco products, utility transportation vehicles, vehicles for mixed use, portable homes, materials for professional use apart from portable tools of the applied or liberal arts, stocks of raw materials and finished or semi-finished products.

Council regulation (EC) no. 1186/2009 (articles 3 to 11) and appendix IV of the French General Tax Code (article 50g 1) specify the conditions to be met in more particular cases.

In order for your foreign car to be exempted, you need to have paid the customs and/or tax charges in your country of origin.

After your vehicle is cleared by customs, you will be issued with the following:

- A copy of the customs declaration
- Proof of residence
- An 846 A certificate, which you need to register the vehicle with a prefecture within four months from the date of its issue.

These documents, which prove that you have paid the duties and taxes, must be presented to the prefecture where your vehicle will be registered. You must change the registration of your vehicle with a prefecture responsible for the registration of vehicles within one month of acquiring your residence permit in France.

To learn more

⇨ Click on the link for more details:
http://www.douane.gouv.fr/services/c184-en-france-metropolitaine

As soon as you arrive in France

Within three months of your arrival in France, you must complete a certain number of procedures connected with your right of stay:

- with the French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII) if you have applied for a long-stay visa equivalent to a residence permit (VLS-TS).
- with the prefecture of your department for other long-stay visas that specify 'residence permit must be applied for'.

Below, you can find a summary of the procedures that need to be carried out.

Procedures to carry out if you hold a VLS-TS (long-stay visa equivalent to a residence permit) [5, 6]

These procedures must be carried out with the OFII.

Your VLS-TS is not a valid residence permit unless it has been confirmed by the OFII.

In order to complete this procedure, you must do the following as soon as you arrive in France:

- complete the form called *Demande d'attestation OFII* (OFII certification application), which will be given to you together with your visa.
- send this form by registered post to the regional office of the OFII for your place of residence in France.
- With the form, enclose a copy of the pages of your passport that contain the following:
  - Information about your identity
  - The stamp of the border police
  - The visa issued to you
  - A copy of your medical certificate, if applicable.

As soon as the OFII receives these documents, it will register your file and send you (via a simple letter) a certificate confirming that you have submitted your file to the address that you specified in the form.

You will then be called to go to the OFII, who will put a secure sticker and a date stamp in your passport. This sticker is equivalent to a residence permit for the duration of the validity of your visa.

Depending on the residence permit you receive (including the VLS-TS), you will have to sign a Republican Integration Contract.

The issuance of your VLS-TS does not automatically permit you to work. You must first register with the prefecture of your department.

You must pay a tax by means of a digital sticker which you can buy at https://www.timbresofii.fr or tax stamps, which are sold in tobacco stores.

When your VLS-TS expires and you still want to remain in France, you must apply for a residence permit from the prefecture within two months prior to the expiration of your long-stay visa.

[5] The information below is intended for people who want to obtain a residence permit that will enable them to stay permanently in France and sign a Republican Integration Contract.

[6] The information contained in this page is up to date with the current laws. They will change in accordance with the regulations that will become applicable in November 2016 under the law regarding the rights of foreigners in France of 7 March 2016.

To learn more:

- ⇨ List of local offices of the OFII:
  http://www.ofii.fr/qui_sommes-nous_46/ou_nous_trouver_mieux_-_flash_933.html?recalcul=oui
- ⇨ https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N107
- ⇨ Find more information at:
  http://accueil-etrangers.gouv.fr/demande-de-titre-de-sejour/vous-etes-ressortissant-e-non/vous-etes-arrive-e-en-france-avec

Procedures to carry out if you hold a long-stay visa containing the statement *titre de séjour à solliciter* ('residence permit must be applied for')[7]

The procedures must be carried out at the prefecture of your place of residence.

You must submit your application for a residence permit within two months of your arrival in France:

- If you live in Paris, you must report to the police station.
- If you live in another department, you must report to the prefecture or sub-prefecture of your department (see the list of departments in the appendix).

Before you go to the prefecture, consult the website of the prefecture of your place of residence, particularly in order to find out what documents you need to bring with you. Try to make an appointment on-line when this service becomes available.

You must attend your appointment at the prefecture in person and have the originals of the supporting documents for your documents.

While waiting for your application to be processed, the prefecture will issue you with a receipt of application for a residence permit (of a duration of at least one month).

Issuance of this receipt does not guarantee the decision that will be taken by the prefect.

You will then, depending on the residence permit you receive, have to sign a Republican Integration Contract at the OFII.

[7] The information contained in this page is legally up to date. It will change according to the regulations which will be implemented in November 2016, in accordance with law no. 2016-274 of 7 March 2016 regarding the rights of foreigners in France.

When your application has been processed, you will be called to go to the prefecture in order to be informed of the decision. If the decision is favourable, you will be issued with a residence permit. You must then pay a tax using tax stamps.

The issuance of your residence permit does not automatically mean that you are permitted to work. You must register with the prefecture of your department.

To learn more

- Details regarding the application procedure for residence permits at the prefecture: https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N110
- http://accueil-etrangers.gouv.fr/demande-de-titre-de-sejour/vous-etes-ressortissant-e-non
- Professional immigration: www.immigration-professionnelle.gouv.fr https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2729
- The Regional Office of the OFII of your department: http://www.ofii.fr/qui_sommes-nous_46/ou_nous_trouver_mieux_-_flash_933.html?recalcul=oui
- The prefecture: http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Le-ministere/Prefectures

Procedures connected with your residence permit[8]

Your country of origin
Getting a visa

VLS-TS
(long-stay visa equivalent to residence

At the OFII
Documents to send:
- ⇨ Copy of the beneficiary's passport, specifying his or her identity.
- ⇨ Copy of the page bearing the long-stay visa.
- ⇨ Copy of the page indicating the date of arrival in France.
- ⇨ A duly completed OFII certification application (given to you when your visa was issued).
- ⇨ If applicable, a copy of the medical certificate issued by the office of the OFII in your country of origin.

Your first meeting
called by the OFII
- ⇨ Signing of your Republican Integration Contract.
- ⇨ Doctor's appointment (unless the appointment take place at the OFII in the country of origin).
- ⇨ Confirmation of the VLS-TS: Placing of the sticker equivalent to a residence permit. You must pay a tax by means of a digital sticker which you can buy at https://www.timbresofii.fr or classic tax stamps sold by tobacco stores.

Other long-stay visas
containing the statement
***carte de séiour à solliciter* ('residence**

At the prefecture
of the department where you live
Residence permit must be applied for
as soon as you arrive in France
- ⇨ Submission of the first application for a residence permit.
- ⇨ Issue of a receipt with a maximum validity of six months prior to obtaining the first residence permit for adult applicants.

Transmission of your file
by the prefecture to the OFII

Your first meeting
called by the OFII
- ⇨ Signing of your Republican Integration Contract.
- ⇨ Health meeting (unless RVS at the OFII in the country of origin).

When you are called by the prefecture
- ⇨ Beneficiaries will be called to go and pick up their residence permit: the tax is payable by you.

[8] The information contained in this page is legally up to date. It will change according to the regulations which will be implemented in November 2016, in accordance with the law of 7 March 2016 regarding the rights of foreigners.

Your individual integration process[9]

Your welcome at the OFII

Once the procedures regarding your residence permit have been completed with the OFII or prefecture, you will be called to come to the OFII for a personal interview.

Bring the following items with you to your appointment:

- Your passport
- Proof of residence in France (payment of rent, water, gas, electricity or telephone bill made out in your name) or, if you are living in another person's accommodation, proof of this.
- A medical certificate if you had a medical examination prior to your departure.
- The amount of tax payable to the OFII for the VLS-TS.

The *contrat d'intégration républicaine* (Republican Integration Contract)[10]

During your interview, you will be presented with the Republican Integration Contract. By signing this contract, you enter into an obligation to go through a personalised process of integration into French society.

This contract is concluded for a period one year between you and the French state, which is represented by the prefect. You will receive rights and must also comply with rules and obligations.

Through this contract, the state provides you with support for your settlement in order to facilitate your integration. This includes the following:

[9] The information below is intended for people who want to obtain a residence permit that will enable them to live permanently in France and sign a Republican Integration Contract. Therefore, this does not concern people are not signatories to a Republican Integration Contract, particularly people who have a residence permit as a visitor, student, intern or employee on a temporary posting who have a 'highly skilled worker's permit' (article 1 of the law of 7 March 2016 regarding the rights of foreigners).

[10] Formerly called the *Contrat d'accueil et d'intégration* (Settlement and Integration Contract).

✓ **Personal interview with an auditor of the OFII**

The purpose of this interview is to evaluate your needs, to assess the status of your administrative, social and professional procedures, to determine the training that you need and, if necessary, to provide you with guidance according to your individual situation.

✓ **Civic training**

You must participate in an obligatory civic training course, which lasts for two days and consists of two modules:

- The principles and values of the French Republic
- The procedures required to access entitlements and employment (Living in and finding employment in France).

✓ **A language test**

This written and oral test is intended to evaluate your level of French.

✓ **Language learning (if necessary)**

If your language skill is lower than level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference, you will be prescribed obligatory language lessons so that you can attain this level (you will receive 50, 100 or 200 hours). Level A1 in French permits you to communicate in day-to-day life.

By signing the Republican Integration Contract, you promise to undergo the prescribed civic and language lessons sincerely and conscientiously. You must also respect the key values of French society and the Republic. If you meet the requirements, you can apply for a multi-year residence card.

The integration process and issuance of the residence permit

In addition to the commitments provided for in the Republican Integration Contract, you can undergo a personalised republican integration process by taking intensive French language lessons.

If you want to obtain a residence permit, you must attain level A2[11] in French of the Common European Framework of Reference[12]. As an applicant for a residence permit and holder of an A1 language certificate, you can take a second language course of 100 hours which will enable you to attain the required level A2.

[11] Enters into force in 2018.
[12] Foreigners over the age of 65 are not subject to the French language requirement.

These lessons are focused on the kind of French used in practical situations, public life and professional life. This content is distributed by language teaching providers throughout France, including social and language workshops and state-funded associations responsible for providing additional language support tailored to the situation of every individual.

Lastly, additional language teaching offered by regional groups can help you to deepen your knowledge of French through modules tailored to suit your needs (e.g. business French). To access these resources, contact your regional administrative offices (town hall, departmental and regional council).

Meeting the requirements of Republican integration is one of the conditions for a residence permit.

To learn more:

⇨ Learn about the Republican Integration Contract:
www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr

Settling in France

Your choice to settle permanently in France involves respecting the key values of French society and the Republic.

To facilitate your integration, you can access entitlements and services tailored to your personal situation as soon as you become a regular resident in France.

The information below is intended for people who do not need to secure accommodation prior to arriving in France[13]. It concerns people who are looking for accommodation or who want to switch accommodation.

Finding accommodation

There are two main ways to find accommodation:

- Rental, which involves paying rent and charges (water, electricity, statutory insurance, property occupancy tax).
- Become an owner, which usually involves taking a loan from a bank.

Cost of accommodation

The cost of accommodation varies according to several criteria for both rental and owned property.

- The region.
- The size of the accommodation, its general condition, its additional facilities (garage, for example).
- The location, whether in the city centre or in rural communes or the district where the accommodation is located.
- The proximity of services and public transport.

There are a variety of different types of private and state accommodation in France. They can be rented unfurnished or furnished.

Finding accommodation in the private sector

You can find private accommodation through people you know as well as by:

- consulting announcements in the press or on many specialised websites.
- using the services if a real estate agency or notary who organises visits and drafts rental agreements.

If you are renting accommodation via a real estate agency, it will charge you for its services. Agency fees are usually equivalent to one month of rent.

[13] For a list of residence permits that require you to have accommodation secured prior to arriving in France, you can consult the site http://accueil-etrangers.gouv.fr/demande-de-titre-de-sejour/vous-etes-ressortissant-e-non/vous-etes-arrive-e-en-france-avec

Finding social housing

France has social housing intended for people with a low income (income status is determined by a certain threshold). You can usually apply for HLM (social or low-income) housing at your town hall.

To make an application for social housing, you need to complete a national form which will enable you to conduct your search in several communes. This search can be done through the social housing organisation of the department in which you wish to live, or through the town hall of the city in which you wish to live.

You only need to fill in this form once, even if you are searching for accommodation in several communes at the same time. You can conduct your search through the HLM organisations of the department where you wish to live or the town hall of the city where you wish to live.

You can also submit an application directly on-line (www.demande-logement-social.gouv.fr).

Registering a housing application will result in the issuance of:

- a registration number (a unique number).
- a certificate of registration.

The registration of your application does not mean that you have been given state housing.

The decision to grant social housing is made by a committee in accordance with your financial means and social situation. The waiting time for obtaining social housing can vary greatly depending on region (between several weeks and several years).

To learn more

⇨ Information from the ministry responsible for housing:
http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/11005_Log-social_numero-unique_DEF5_21-03-11_light_texte-non-vectorise.pdf

⇨ On-line application for social housing:
https://www.demande-logement-social.gouv.fr

⇨ The housing application form is available at:
www.service-public.fr

Renting accommodation

What you need to do to live in rented accommodation:

- Always make sure to sign a rental or lease agreement that specifies the amount of rent. A lease is usually concluded for a period of three to six years and is tacitly renewable.
- Pay the owner a deposit equivalent to one month of rent. This deposit is usually paid pack one month after you have moved out of the premises.
- A guarantee by a third party to pay the rent in the event of default on your part. A guarantee is not obligatory but is required by many property owners.
- Conduct an assessment of the property in order to document, together with the owner or his or her representative, the condition of the property at the time of the signing of the lease.

What you need to do if you want to leave your rented accommodation:

- Give the owner prior notice of your departure. The notice period can vary depending on your personal situation (one to three months in advance).
- Conduct an assessment of the property upon your departure. If no damage is found, the deposit that you paid when you signed the lease will be returned to you in full.

In addition to rent, the tenant must pay other expenses connected with the occupation of accommodation:

- Utilities (hot and cold water, electricity, heating, telephone, household waste, etc.). Some of these costs may be included in the rental amount.
- Statutory insurance for the property rented.
- Property occupancy tax.

Before signing the lease, make sure that:

- you know all the expenses that have to be paid.
- the amount of the rent does not exceed 30% of your net monthly salary (your last three wage slips may be requested as supporting documents).
- The cleanliness of the property and the suitability of its facilities for your needs.

Housing benefit

If you meet certain criteria, particularly in terms of your residency and financial means, you may be able to receive housing benefit, called *Aide Personnalisée au Logement* or *allocation logement*, which is paid by the *Caisses d'allocations familiales* (Family Benefits Offices). The amount of this benefit varies according to several criteria such as financial means, the number of people living in the household and the place of residence.

To learn more

- ⇨ Information regarding the termination of a lease and the notice period: https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N339
- ⇨ *Caisse d'allocations familiales*: http://www.caf.fr

Buying property

If you wish to buy a property that has already been constructed, it is very important to verify the condition of the property and to determine if any works need to be carried out. The seller is also obligated to provide evaluations.

If the property will be jointly owned, find out if any future works are scheduled and find out about the rules of shared tenancy or joint ownership.

If you want to buy a property that will be constructed in the future, you must find out what the formalities are regarding the construction.

To learn more

- ⇨ Procedures for the construction of housing: http://vosdroits.service-public.fr/particuliers/N23245.xhtml

Finding a job[14]

Searching for a job

Having a job will facilitate your integration into French society.

There are various possibilities for finding employment:

- Paid employment: you may be offered to sign a permanent or fixed-term contract, or to register with a temp agency (offers of temporary employment that meet the one-time needs of employers).
- Self-employment: create your own company or business.

During your interview with the auditor of the OFII, you can express your wish to find a job and obtain information about this topic.

You will take part in an obligatory civic education course called 'Living in and finding employment in France', which will give you information you can use to plan your employment goals and identify the organisations you need to contact as well as the procedures involved.

It is your responsibility to carry out the procedures necessary for your job search.

To do this, you can use your personal network (family, friends, acquaintances) and job seekers 'organisations which can help you to identify your career goals, make new contacts, etc.

You can contact the *Pôle Emploi*, which is responsible for supporting, informing and guiding people seeking work or education. You can also contact a *Mission locale* if you are less than 26 years old or a *Cap emploi* if you have a disability.

Before looking for a job, make sure to prepare the documents you might need: Curriculum vitae (CV), covering letter, degree certificates, testimonials from previous employers, etc.

[14] www.immigration-professionnelle.fr

Registration with the *Pôle Emploi* can only be done on-line. In the event of hardware or technical problems (e.g. you do not have a computer, you do not know how to complete a form), you can contact a *Pôle emploi* by calling 3949 or visiting your nearest *Pôle emploi* branch office.

Go to www.pole-emploi.frunder '*candidat*':

- Before registering, make sure you have your residence permit, social security card, a CV and evidence of employment if you have worked within the last four years, with you.
- Click on the link '*m'inscrire/me réinscrire*'.
- Complete '*votre situation*'.
- Complete your registration application on-line and print it.
- After registering on-line, you will be offered a consultation meeting. You must go to this meeting with all the supporting documents specified by the website.

The job vacancies on the website of the *Pôle Emploi* can be viewed without registering in advance.

You can also register with temp agencies, which can offer you temporary jobs.

To learn more

If you want to create your own company, get support from the organisations which can advise and guide you:

⇨ https://www.afecreation.fr

⇨ https://www.service-public.fr/professionnels-entreprises/vosdroits/N16147

⇨ http://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/je-cree-mon-entreprise-@/index.jspz?id=77360

Accessing professional education

Professional education is a way of gaining employment because it improves your skills and qualifications, consolidates your job search and helps you to develop professionally.

You can take courses before getting a job as well as throughout your entire career.

Professionals such as careers advisers (particularly at the *Pôle emploi* and *Mission locale*) and the Regional Public Guidance Office, which is coordinated by the Regional Council, can advise and guide you according to your needs.

Private organisations such as the *Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes* (Association for Adult Continuing Education) can, for a fee, also provide education.
You can get information from guidance centres, universities, schools, forums and exhibitions in order to clarify your plans.

Having your degrees and experience recognised

Before arriving in France, you can find out what the equivalent French qualifications are for your degrees and certify your previous experience.

There is a centre that specialises in the recognition of foreign degrees in France: ENIC-NARIC.

This organisation is a source of information that provides advice and help and that can also issue you with a certificate attesting the French equivalents of the qualifications that you possess. The latter service must be paid for (€70 for two certificates in 2015).

ENIC-NARIC also issues certificates recognising studies and training undertaken abroad.

Any person, regardless of age, nationality, status and education, who can prove at least three years of experience directly related to the qualification desired can apply to have their experience certified.

To learn more

- Places where you can find information and guidance:
  http://www.orientation-pour-tous.fr
  http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid160/les-lieux-d-information-de-l-orientation.html
- *Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes* (Association for adult continuing education):
  www.afpa.fr
- ENIC-NARIC:
  http://www.ciep.fr/enic-naric-france
- Application form for certifying the equivalence of degrees:
  http://www.ciep.fr/sites/default/files/migration/enic-naricfr/docs/formulaire-de-demande-d-attestation-de-comparabilite.pdf
- VAE:
  http://www.vae.gouv.fr

Supporting your children

Protection of mothers and children

The Departmental Council is responsible for child protection. It is responsible for **the social services of the department**, **protection of mothers and children** and **child support services**.

The service for the protection of mothers and children offers free consultations with a doctor and disease prevention measures for pregnant women and children under the age of six. **To access services for the protection of mothers and children**, contact them by telephone or visit the website of your department's Departmental Council. You can schedule an appointment on the phone or go to their office in person during opening hours.

Some vaccinations for your children are obligatory, while others are only recommended. You can find out more from your local mothers and children support service.

To learn more

⇨ You can find information at www.allopmi.fr
https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F724

Child care

There are various child-care solutions available to you if your child is below school age.

The use of these services requires the payment of fees, and the cost for the family is calculated on the basis of your income.

Different types of child care also exist for children of school age (after-school activity centres and during the holidays).

✓ Group child care

Group child care is provided by a team of qualified staff in special facilities in order to promote the emotional, intellectual and physical development of the child.

- Nurseries provide regular child care during the day, either for the whole day or part of the day, for children under the age of three whose parents are working, studying or searching for employment. This type of child care is in high demand from families and it is sometimes difficult to find a place. It is recommended that you find out about registration procedures in the early stages of pregnancy.
- Daycare centres sometimes accept (for a few hours on certain days of the week) children under the age of six months in order for the parents to pursue personal or social activities. They offer children the opportunity to meet other children and adults, do stimulating activities and socialise, and can prepare them for entry into kindergarten.

✓ Individual child care

Your child is looked after in a family setting by a single person: a nanny. The nanny must be approved by the Departmental Council, i.e. he or she must have undergone training in child care and must meet certain conditions, particularly in relation to child care. Nannies generally work in their home or a nanny centre (which can comprise up to four nannies). State certification gives nannies the right to take care of one, two or three children at the same time (four in very rare cases).

To learn more

⇨ Website of the CAF:
http://www.mon-enfant.fr/web/guest/modes-garde/assistantes-maternelles

In addition, the *Relais d'assistant(e)s maternel(le)s* is a place where you can get information, meet others and talk to staff who serve nannies, parents and childcare specialists.

Schoolchildren can, like younger children, also be looked after by an approved nanny or someone employed in the home of the parents.

Family services

The social security family division is part of the nation's services that support families in their day-to-day lives.

In order to receive family benefits, in addition to the conditions of dependency and means which apply to certain benefits, you must meet the following conditions:

- You must be a resident in France, and so must the children whom you are responsible for.
- If you are a foreign national who is not from the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland, you must prove the validity of your residence in France and prove the validity of your children's entry into France if they were born abroad.

There are two types of benefits funded by the social security family division that are paid out by the Family Benefits Offices and Agricultural Mutual Aid Funds: maintenance benefits and specific-purpose benefits.

Maintenance benefits are family benefits paid out to people who are the guardians of at least two children below the age of 20 months. The parent must carry out certain procedures with his or her *Caisse d'allocations familiales* (Family Benefits Office). The amount of benefits is adjusted in accordance with the household's means and the number of dependent children. The amount of benefit is raised according to the age of the child in accordance with certain conditions. Family benefits are paid on a monthly basis.

Other maintenance benefits can be paid, such as a supplementary family benefit, if you meet the eligibility requirements.

Specific-purpose benefits include a back-to-school benefit to cover part of the costs of the new school year and supplementary child care of your choosing, which can be granted for the care of your children if they are less than six years old.

To learn more

- ⇨ Find out what the eligibility requirements are, the procedures that need to be carried out and the amounts:
  www.caf.fr
  www.caf.fr/aides-et-services/s-informer-sur-les-aides
  https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2787
- ⇨ Additional child care options:
  http://www.caf.fr/aides-et-services/s-informer-sur-les-aides/petite-enfance/le-complement-de-libre-choix-du-mode-de-garde
- ⇨ Download the CAF's guide to its services:
  www.viesdefamille.fr

School

School enables all pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and general culture so that they can develop their personality, sense of morals and critical thinking, and participate in social and professional life and be an active citizen.

It is highly recommended that your children begin their school education from the age of three in kindergarten. In some schools, schooling is possible from the age of two.

School is mandatory for all children between the ages of six and 16.

	Age of child	Class
Nursery school	3 to 6	*Petite section* *Moyenne section* *Grande section*
Primary school	Around 6	CP, CE1, CE2, CM1, CM2
Lower secondary school	Around 11	Years 6, 5, 4, 3
Upper secondary school	Around 15	*Seconde, Première, Terminale*

As the parents of schoolchildren, you are obliged to ensure that your children take their education seriously. You also have rights: the right to vote in and be eligible for elections of parent representatives on school committees and the administration of secondary schools.

The aim of kindergarten is to prepare pupils to function as a group by teaching them the rules of collective life. During this period, children gradually learn to read and write.

In kindergarten and primary school, children study for 24 hours a week, spread over nine half-days in class. All lessons are obligatory. Children can have lunch at home or in the canteen, which is a paid service.

From the age of two or three, children can attend a public or certified private school. Both teach the national curriculum.

Registration with a kindergarten or primary school is the responsibility of the parents. This consists of two stages:

- You must first go to the town hall, which will decide which school you should register your child in. You will be given a registration certificate with the name and address of the school.
- You will then meet this school's director in order to finalise the registration of your child.

On the day of registration, you must have the following documents with you:

- The registration certificate issued by the town hall.
- Your family book or a copy of your child's birth certificate.
- A document certifying that your child has received the obligatory vaccinations for his or her age.

Registration usually takes place beginning in November until the end of January for the following school year.

Registration is possible throughout the year, including if you move to a new address. You can find out about registration procedures at your town hall, schools and daycare organisations.

Lower and upper secondary school

All schoolchildren attend lower secondary school without the need to pass an exam at the end of primary school. Children usually start lower secondary school at the age of 11. A registration file for the start of 6th year at the lower secondary school assigned to your child in around April. Complete the registration materials as required with the help of your child's teacher or even the director of your child's school.

Lower secondary school lasts for four years: year 6, 5, 4 and 3, at the end of which, the pupil will sit the exam for the *diplôme national du brevet* (DNB). This certificate, which is awarded by a jury, attests that the child has mastered the foundation of knowledge, skills and culture. All the lower secondary school pupils are automatically registered to sit this exam.

Informational meetings can be organised by your child's teacher or the director of the school to inform you about the different pathways possible for your child.

At the end of lower secondary school, pupils can continue on to upper secondary school for general and technical education or a vocational upper secondary school. They can also take apprenticeship courses in a training centre for apprentices.

Children enter upper secondary school at around the age of 15. This lasts for three years from *seconde* to *terminale*. It culminates in the award of the French baccalaureate.

To learn more

- ⇨ School dates and holidays:
  http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid87910/calendrier-scolaire-pour-les-annees-2015-2016-2016-2017-2017-2018.html
- ⇨ Parents 'guide to lower secondary school:
  http://www.onisep.fr/Choisir-mes-etudes/Au-college/College-mode-d-emploi/L-inscription-au-college
- ⇨ The DNB:
  http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid214/le-college-enseignements-organisation-et-fonctionnement.html
- ⇨ You can find detailed information about secondary school registration and pathways here:
  http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid120/l-inscription-lycee.html

Non-francophone schoolchildren

Non-francophone schoolchildren are placed in school according to their age and abilities following a test in their native language.

They are registered in a normal class that teaches the usual curriculum. They are also registered in a UPE2A (Teaching Unit for New Foreign-Language Pupils) so they can receive intensive French lessons. These are scheduled around their usual school timetable. They are increasingly integrated into ordinary classes depending on the progress they make in the UPE2A until they are fully able to follow the usual curriculum. The end of the support of the UPE2A is managed by the school's teaching team under the authority of the director of head of the establishment based on the mastery of skills.

A good command of spoken and written French is necessary to do well in school, go to university and build a successful professional and social life.

To learn more

- ⇨ http://www.casnav78.ac-versailles.fr/index.php/les-dispositifs-daccueil.html
- ⇨ Map and information of primary and secondary schools - UPE2A schoolchildren who have recently arrived in France and whose native language is not French:
  http://www.casnav78.ac-versailles.fr/spip.php?article12

Before and after class

If your child goes to school, certain communes have after-school leisure centres and child-care facilities that take care of children in the morning before school and in the evening after school, sometimes in the premises of the child's school.

In primary school, pupils can do their homework after school in the school's facilities with the help of teachers or qualified staff. The study session is supervised. It takes place after the children have had a snack, from 4.30pm to 6pm. It is usually organised by the town hall, and its cost is calculated in accordance with the financial means of the child's family.

You can find out more from the person responsible at the school concerned.

On Wednesdays and during the school holidays, children can attend after-school activity centres, usually for the whole day. Its cost is calculated in accordance with the income of the child's family.

Outside of school, at both primary and secondary level, there are associations that offer free tutoring to children who live in the local district or elsewhere in the city.

You can register your child for extracurricular activities (sports, culture, music, etc.).

To learn more

⇨ http://eduscol.education.fr/cid47156/sport-scolaire-et-eps.html

All children are taught sports and physical activities at school. Sports in school teaches children a variety of physical activities, encourages team spirit and is an important part of the physical health of the pupils.

Schoolchildren who wish to do more sports can register at their school's *association sportive scolaire* (school sports association).

Going on holiday abroad with your children

If you are planning to go abroad with France as your point of departure, together with any children under the age of 18 who do not have a residence permit, you must ask the prefecture of your department for a *titre d'identité républicaine* (republican identity certificate) for any children under the age of 18 who were born in France, or a *document de circulation pour les enfants mineurs* (travel document for children under the age of 18).

To learn more

⇨ Apply for a travel document for under-age children or a republican identity certificate here:

http://accueil-etrangers.gouv.fr/voyage-de-mineur-etranger/demander-un-document-de

Procedures

Tax

Taxes include all the taxes, duties and charges imposed on juridical persons (companies, groups, organisations, etc.) and natural persons (individuals) with tax residence in France. Taxes are used to maintain the army and the police and cover administrative costs. They are distributed among the citizens in accordance with their capacity to contribute.

✓ Income tax

Tax is calculated by the administration on the basis of the income you declare and taking into account your family situation (household members, dependants, etc.).

It is:

- **annual:** based on your income from the previous calendar year.
- **total:** you are taxed on all the income you receive within France and from abroad if these customers are domiciled in France.
- **adjusted**: according to your personal and family circumstances.
- **divided into brackets:** your total net income is subject to a progressive tax scale.
- **subject to a declaration of income:** anyone aged 18 or over is subject to income tax. You are responsible for declaring your income regardless of its amount. Only children over the age of 18 who are dependent on their parents are exempt from income tax. In this case, their income is included in the declaration of their parents.

From the age of 21, regardless of whether or not you work, you must make an income tax declaration. If you have received a letter from the tax office informing you of the possibility of making this declaration online, you can make your first declaration online. If you have not received a letter from the tax office, you cannot make the declaration online**.** You must get the paper form by downloading one from www.impots.gouv.fr or getting one from your local public finance centre (department for individual taxes).

To learn more

⇨ http://www.impots.gouv.fr/portal/dgi/public/popup?espId=1&typePage=cpr02&docOid=documentstandard_1540

✓ Value-added tax (VAT)

VAT is a general indirect tax which is included in the price of goods and services and is paid by consumers.

✓ Property occupancy tax and property ownership tax

Property occupancy tax is one of the local taxes. It is payable by any person occupying a property as of 1 January of the current year, regardless of whether they own the property, are tenants or occupying the property free of charge.
It includes a TV licence. You must pay this tax if you are subject to the property occupancy tax and you are occupying, as of 1 January of the tax year, a property that contains a television or similar device.

Property ownership tax is payable by the owners of property.
It is collected by the state, and the money is paid to the local regions in order to fund the public services they are responsible for.

To learn more

- ⇨ http://www.impots.gouv.fr/portal/dgi/public/popup?typePage=cpr02&espId=-1&docOid=documentstandard_659&temNvlPopUp=true
- ⇨ More details about French tax is also available at the website of the Ministry of Finance and Public Accounts:
  www.impots.gouv.fr

■ Insuring yourself and others

French law requires you to subscribe to an insurance policy to cover certain fundamental risks. Other supplementary policies are optional, even if they are sometimes highly advisable.

Certain insurance policies are obligatory such as home or car insurance:

✓ Home insurance

Home insurance is obligatory for property owners whose property is jointly owned as well as for tenants, who have to subscribe, at a minimum, to a a policy that covers rental risks (fire,

explosion, water damage). 'Rental risk 'insurance only covers damages caused to the property itself.
To cover damages caused to neighbours and your possessions, you can subscribe to additional third-party liability insurance and multi-risk home insurance.

✓ **Car insurance**
It is obligatory to subscribe to car or motorcycle insurance if you drive a vehicle with an engine.

Other insurance policies are strongly advised:

✓ **Family civil liability**
The law stipulates that damages caused to others must be repaired. Multi-risk home agreements often include a 'family civil liability 'guarantee to cover damages caused:

- accidentally
- by a family member
- in a private setting
- to other people or their possessions.

The contract usually includes additional guarantees:

- School and after-school insurance (limited to the liability of children).
- Insurance related to the practice of a sport. However, many 'risky 'sports are excluded.

Joining *Assurance maladie*

Assurance maladie is founded on the principle of national solidarity, according to which subscribers in good health help to fund the care of those who are ill.

Being a member of *Assurance maladie* if obligatory for all people working or living in France on a regular ongoing basis. You need this to receive medical care.

To become a member, you must go to the office of the *caisse primaire d'assurance maladie* (your local health insurance office) of the department where you live (whether you are an employee or you have never worked in France). Minors are usually insured with their parents.

You will be assigned a health insurance scheme in accordance with your situation.

Universal health protection (PUMA - protection universelle maladie) guarantees a right to care and coverage of personal medical costs to anyone who works or lives in France on a regular ongoing basis, throughout their entire life.

You will then receive a registration number. This number is a prior requirement for obtaining your *carte vitale*. This smart card contains the administrative information required to provide you with medical care.

Your *carte vitale* may be requested:

- by doctors (GP or specialist)
- pharmacies
- medical laboratories
- radiology clinics
- when you are hospitalised, etc.

Any medical certificate issued by a doctor, hospital or pharmacy is subject to a fee. Medical costs may be covered partially by Social Security or a supplementary health insurance plan. You need to check with the practitioner regarding fees and reimbursement rates.

✓ Treating doctor's certificate for the reimbursement of costs

You must inform your local health insurance office of the name of the doctor you have chosen in order to receive medical care (treating doctor) and receive the full amount of reimbursement.

✓ Subscribing to an additional health insurance policy or to private supplementary health insurance

You can subscribe to supplementary private health insurance that covers all or part of the costs (medicine, drugs, hospitalisation, care) that *Assurance maladie* does not reimburse. This procedure is not obligatory but it is recommended.

To subscribe to supplementary health insurance, you must already be a member of *Assurance maladie*.

This additional insurance is payable by you.

Depending on your financial means, you may be able to receive supplementary coverage free of charge (referred to as CMU-c in French) or aid for the payment of supplementary health insurance (referred to as ACS in French) in order to reduce its cost.

To learn more

Website of the *Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie* (local office for the administration of state health insurance fund)

⇨ To know which *Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie* you are assigned to: http://www.ameli.fr/assures/votre-caisse/index.php

- ⇨ Documents required to register with *Assurance maladie*: http://www.ameli.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/formulaires/736__pour_S11xxbis___PUMA_DEMAND_OD_10.pdf
- ⇨ Registering children under the social security plan of the parents: http://www.ameli.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/formulaires/S3705.pdf
- ⇨ PUMA: http://www.ameli.fr/assures/droits-et-demarches/la-protection-universelle-maladie.php
- ⇨ CMUc: http://www.cmu.fr/cmu-complementaire.php
- ⇨ ACS: http://www.info-acs.fr

Opening a bank account

You must open a bank account in France in order to function in daily life.

A bank account can be opened for children.

Go to the bank branch of your choice with the following documents:

- Your passport
- Proof of residence (gas, electricity or land-line telephone bill, or receipt of rental payment)

Once your current account is open, you can use it freely and order a debit card and cheque book.

Ask your bank in your country of origin if it is associated with a French network. If it is, it will be easier to open an account in France.

Your bank will give you the bank details required for certain transfers to your account, e.g. your salary, or the debit of certain bills (rent, telephone, etc.).

A joint account, or shared account, enables multiple people to open a single bank account. Opening a joint account follows the same rules as those for individual accounts. The joint owners of the account bear joint responsibility. It is also possible to open an account for a child.
Anyone living in France has the right to open a bank account and have access to basic services. If you are initially refused an account by a bank, it is possible to file an appeal with the Bank of France for assistance.

In France, it is obligatory to have a bank account as soon as you receive a salary.

To learn more

⇨ http://vosdroits.service-public.fr//particuliers

Travelling within France

✓ Public transportation

The local regions offer various modes of public transportation: metro, tram, bus, coach. Subscriptions are usually available for regular users.

You can find out at your town hall or from transportation operators about the tariffs you are entitled to for public transportation.

Consult the websites and apps of your city's public transportation authorities for:

- information about timetables.
- information about lines, suspension of services, the nearest stations that link to the French commune of your choice.

✓ Trains

France has a developed rail network, which makes trains a convenient method of transport. Every large city in France has a train connection to its suburbs. Cities are connected by regional express trains and, in the case of the largest cities, the TGV (high-speed trains).

To learn more

⇨ The public transportation networks in France:
http://www.itransports.fr

⇨ Trains:
http://www.voyages-sncf.com

⇨ Find your nearest airport:
www.aeroport.fr

✓ Driving in France

1. Driving licence

❒ You have a non-European driving licence

You can drive on the basis of your licence as soon as you arrive in France for a period of one year after receiving your French residence permit. In order for your licence to be recognised during this period, it must be valid and accompanied by an international driving licence. If you are from a country that does not issue international driving licences, you must get an official translation of your national driving licence.

If you want to drive in France for more than one year, you must apply for your driving licence to be changed into a French licence within one year of the date you acquire residency. This date corresponds either with the start date of your first residence permit or the date of the stamp applied by the OFII on your first long-stay visa equivalent to a residence permit.

It is strongly recommended that you request the exchange within the first weeks of your arrival because once the one-year period is over, this exchange is no longer possible and you will have to pass the French driving text in order to be authorised to drive. Driving in France with a non-recognised foreign licence is subject to severe penalties, even if this licence is still valid and accompanied by an international driving licence.

For your licence to be exchanged, it must:

- be valid.
- have been issued prior to your arrival in France.
- be issued by a state that has a mutual exchange agreement for driving licences.

To exchange your driving licence, you must consult the website of the prefecture nearest to your home that is responsible for this service in order to find out what documents you need to provide and the procedures involved in exchanging your driving licence. You must present the originals as well as photocopies of your documents. The supporting documents must be written in French or accompanied by an official translation done by a certified translator in France. A list of these translators is available from the prefecture or sub-prefecture.

If you meet the conditions required to exchange your licence, a French licence will be issued to you in exchange for your foreign driving licence. The date specified on your French licence will be the date you obtained your original licence.

If you do not meet these conditions, you must pass the French driving test in order to be able to drive France once the temporary period of your licence has expired.

❒ **Learning to drive**

The minimum age required to register for a driving test in France is 15. Depending on the type of licence you are seeking, the minimum age may be higher. To prepare for the test, you need to go to a driving school.

The test comprises a general theory examination (on the code) and a practical test, which can only be taken if you have passed the theory examination. If you pass both tests, a temporary document will be issued to you, permitting you to drive before you receive your proper licence.

You must have taken at least 20 hours of driving lessons (the minimum required to take the practical test). In practice, however, the students of driving schools need 35 hours of lessons in total on average to pass the test.

Prices vary between different driving schools and cities.

To learn more

- ⇨ State with an agreement with France for the exchange of licences: http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/Liste_permis_de_conduire_valables_a_l_echange_012014_cle8cc6c4.pdf
- ⇨ Getting a driving licence in France: http://www.securite-routiere.gouv.fr/permis-de-conduire/passer-son-permis http://vosdroits.service-public.fr/particuliers/F2828.xhtml

2. Registering your foreign vehicle in France

It is obligatory to register your foreign vehicle in France within one month of your arrival. The address indicated on your certificate will be your home address in France.

❒ **How to register your vehicle:**

- You can authorise a vehicle professional (e.g. garage, dealership, etc.) to carry out this procedure for you.
- You can carry out the procedure at the prefecture of your choice that is responsible for this service, or by yourself or by authorising another person to do so.

Check the procedures that need to be done on the website of the prefecture.

❒ **To register your vehicle, you must provide the following documents:**

- Proof of identity (one per joint owner).
- Proof of residence (in the case of more than one owner, the proof of residence of the owner whose address will be indicated on the registration certificate).
- A power of attorney if someone is doing the procedure for you or if one of the joint owners is doing it for all the joint owners.
- The receipt for your payment for the registration certificate:
  - by cheque.
  - by debit card.
  - or in cash if you paid on-site.
- The former certificate
- form cerfa no. 13750*04 to apply for a certificate.
- proof of tax: clearance certificate 846A issued by customs.

❒ **Cost**

The cost registration varies, particularly depending on the power of the vehicle and the region where you live.

Sports, culture and associations

✓ Sports

Sports and physical activities in France are generally organised by sports associations affiliated with sports federations.

To find a club near you, check the websites of sports associations which have the information you need.

To learn more

⇨ http://www.sports.gouv.fr/spip?page=sg-federation

⇨ http://franceolympique.com/cat/43-federations_membres_du_cnosf.html

The city where you live should have sports options throughout the whole year.

To learn more

⇨ Contact your town hall:
http://lannuaire.service-public.fr/navigation/index-mairie.html

✓ Cultural activities

For culture and entertainment, there are libraries and media libraries available. These public places, which are generally free, enable you to access information, education and leisure activities in the form of reading collections (comic books, journals, books, press publications) and services (assistance, loans, reservations, events). You can also find CDs, DVDs and internet access in media libraries. These materials can be borrowed or viewed on-site.

Libraries and media libraries are places that host events for you and your children, such as shows, readings, workshops, exhibitions, etc.

To learn more

⇨ Addresses of public libraries:
http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/bibrep/pres.htm

For entertainment, you can also go to the cinema, the theatre or to concerts. Most town halls organise shows that can be subscribed to or that offer tickets at reduced prices.

You can also visit museums, tourist sites and historic monuments as well as pedestrian public spaces.

To learn more about your city and its surroundings, contact the tourism office (https://office-de-tourisme.net/), which can provide you with detailed information about the location you wish to visit.

To learn more

⇨ http://www.tourisme.fr

✓ Participation in associations

The communes have a variety of social and cultural groups for all ages that you can join. Joining an association enables you to do leisure activities as well as meet new people. Find out more from the town hall[15] of your commune or the *Maison des Associations* (Associations House), which will inform you about the activities of local associations.

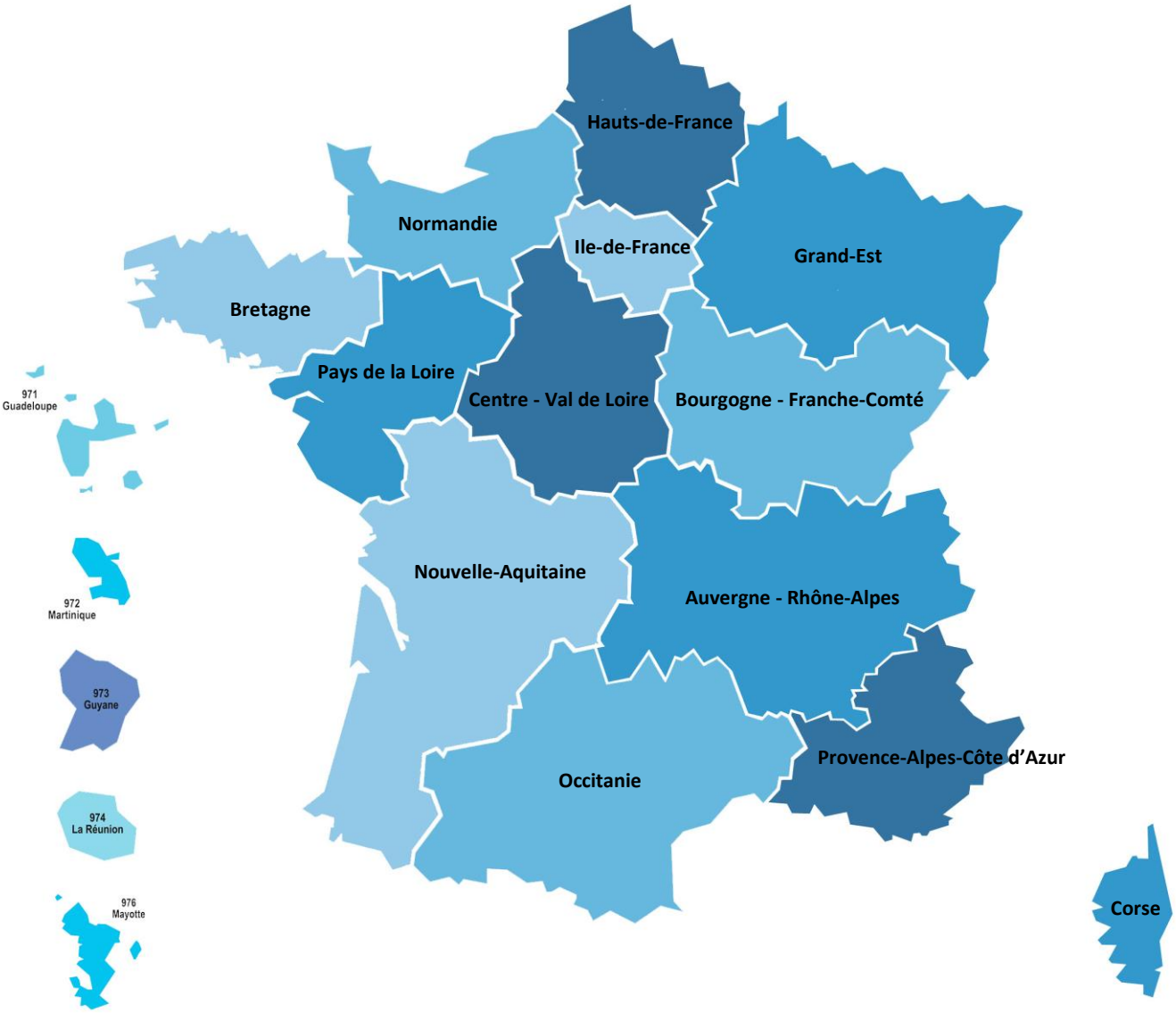
Participation in society and helping others are just some of the reasons to support an association as a volunteer or to create your own association. You can find out more in your commune. To find organisations and learn about their needs, visit the following sites:

- *France Bénévolat*: here, you will find lists of associations as well as advice and reading material about volunteering.
- *Espace Bénévolat*: this is a register of 4,000 volunteering initiatives throughout all of France.

[15] In order to support new residents and help them to settle into their new lives, every town hall in France provides a practical guide containing detailed information, particularly about support and leisure activities.

Appendices

Map of the regions of France



List of regions/regional prefectures/regional councils/departments

Regions	Regional prefectures	Regional councils	Departments
Grand Est (Alsace - Champagne-Ardenne - Lorraine)	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/alsace-champagne-ardenne-lorraine	http://www.alsacechampagneardennelorraine.eu/	08. Ardennes 10. Aube 51. Marne 52. Haute-Marne 54. Meurthe-et-Moselle 55. Meuse 57. Moselle 67. Bas-Rhin 68. Haut-Rhin 88. Vosges
Nouvelle Aquitaine (Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes)	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/aquitaine-limousin-poitou-charentes	http://laregion-alpc.fr/	16. Charente 17. Charente-Maritime 19. Corrèze 23. Creuse 24. Dordogne 33. Gironde 40. Landes 47. Lot-et-Garonne 64. Pyrénées-Atlantiques 79. Deux-Sèvres 86. Vienne 87. Haute-Vienne
Auvergne - Rhône-Alpes	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/auvergne-rhone-alpes	http://www.auvergnerhonealpes.eu/	01. Ain 03. Allier 07. Ardèche 15. Cantal 26. Drôme 38. Isère 42. Loire 43. Haute-Loire 63. Puy-de-Dôme 69. Rhône 73. Savoie 74. Haute-Savoie
Bourgogne - Franche-Comté	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/bourgogne-franche-comte	http://www.conseil-general.com/regions/conseils-regionaux/conseil-regional-bourgogne-franche-comte.htm	21. Côte-d'Or 25. Doubs 39. Jura 58. Nièvre 70. Haute-Saône 71. Saône-et-Loire 89. Yonne 90. Territoire de Belfort

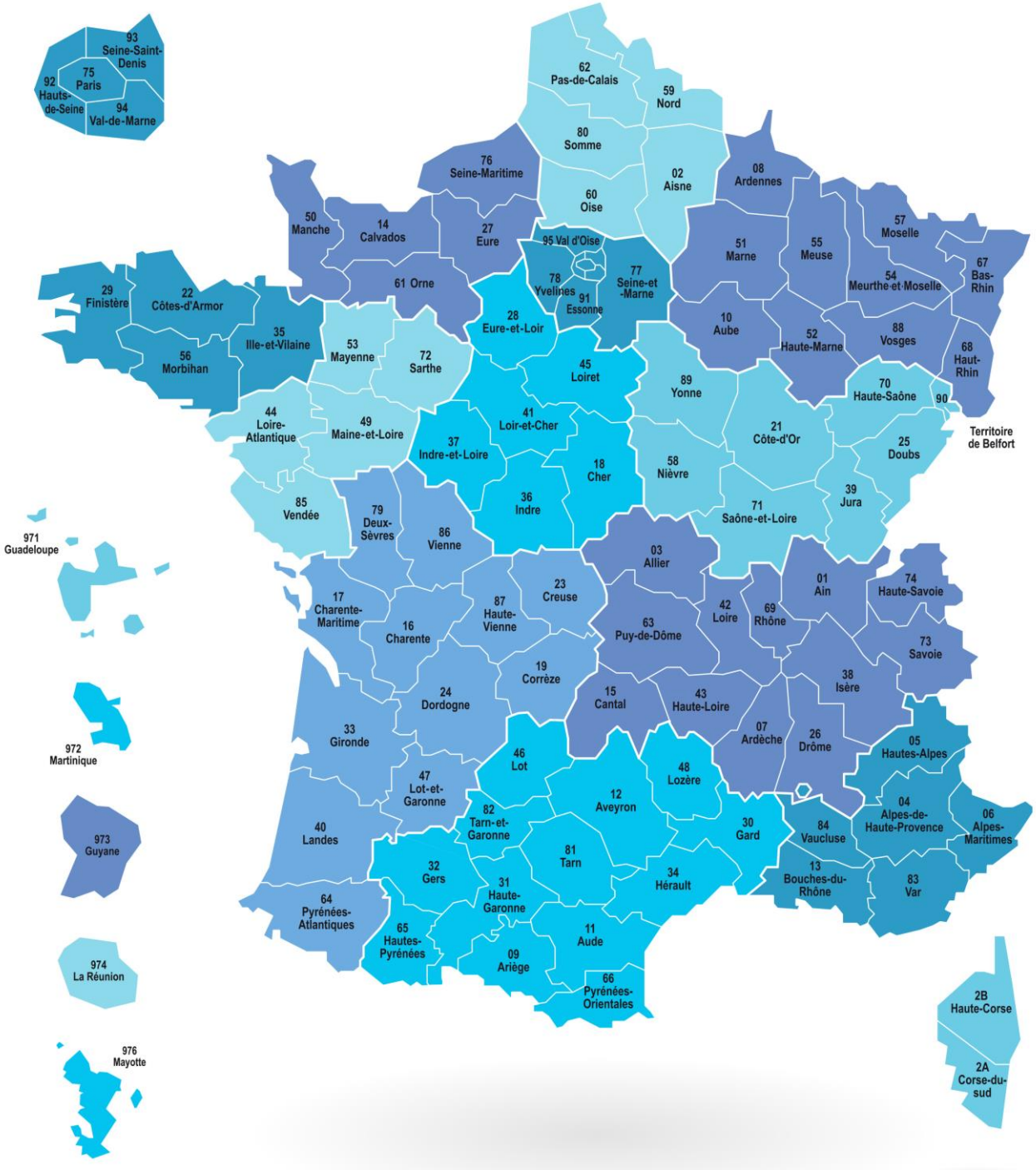
Regions, departments, regional councils

Regions	Regional prefectures	Regional councils	Departments
Bretagne	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/bretagne	http://www.bretagne.bzh/	22. Côtes-d'Armor 29. Finistère 35. Ile et Vilaine 56. Morbihan
Centre - Val-de-Loire	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/centre-val-de-loire	http://www.regioncentre-valdeloire.fr/accueil.html	18. Cher 28. Eure-et-Loir 36. Indre 37. Indre et Loire 41. Loir et Cher 45. Loiret
Corse	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/corse	http://www.conseil-general.com/regions/conseils-regionaux/conseil-regional-corse.htm	2A. Corse du Sud 2B. Haute Corse
Occitanie (Languedoc Roussillon - Midi Pyrénées)	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/languedoc-roussillon-midi-pyrenees/	http://www.regionlrmp.fr/	09. Ariège 11. Aude 12. Aveyron 30. Gard 31. Haute Garonne 32. Gers 34. Hérault 46. Lot 48. Lozère 65. Hautes-Pyrénées 66. Pyrénées-Orientales 81. Tarn 82. Tarn-et-Garonne
Hauts-de-France (Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie)	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/nord-pas-de-calais-picardie	http://www.conseil-general.com/regions/conseils-regionaux/conseil-regional-nord-pas-de-calais-picardie.htm	02. Aisne 59. Nord 60. Oise 62. Pas-de-Calais 80. Somme
Normandie	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/normandie	http://www.conseil-general.com/regions/conseils-regionaux/conseil-regional-normandie.htm	14. Calvados 27. Eure 50. Manche 61. Orne 76. Seine-Maritime
Pays de la Loire	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/pays-de-la-loire	http://www.paysdelaloire.fr/	44. Loire-Atlantique 49. Maine-et-Loire 53. Mayenne 72. Sarthe 85. Vendée

Regions, departments, regional councils

Regions	Regional prefectures	Regional councils	Departments
Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/provence-alpes-cote-dazur	http://www.regionpaca.fr/	04. Alpes-de-Haute-Provence 05. Hautes-Alpes 06. Alpes-Maritimes 13. Bouches-du-Rhône 83. Var 84. Vaucluse
Ile-de-France	http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/ile-de-france	http://www.iledefrance.fr/conseil-regional	75. Paris 77. Seine-et-Marne 78. Yvelines 91. Essonne 92. Hauts-de-Seine 93. Seine-Saint-Denis 94. Val-de-Marne 95. Val-d'Oise
Guadeloupe	http://www.guadeloupe.pref.gouv.fr/	http://www.regionguadeloupe.fr/accueil/	
Guyane	http://www.guyane.pref.gouv.fr/	http://www.cg973.fr/spip.php?page=sommaire	
Reunion	http://www.reunion.gouv.fr/	http://www.cg974.fr/	
Martinique	http://www.martinique.pref.gouv.fr	http://www.cg972.com/	
Mayotte	http://www.mayotte.pref.gouv.fr	http://www.cg976.fr/	

Map of the French departments



List of French departments

01. Ain www.ain.fr	**18. Cher** http://www.departement18.fr	**34. Hérault** http://www.herault.fr
02. Aisne www.aisne.com	**19. Corrèze** http://www.correze.fr	**35. Ile et Vilaine** http://www.ille-et-vilaine.fr/fr
03. Allier www.allier.fr	**2A. Corse du Sud** http://www.cg-corsedusud.fr	**36. Indre** http://www.indre.fr
04. Alpes-de-Haute-Provence www.mondepartement04.fr	**2B. Haute Corse** http://www.haute-corse.fr/site/	**37. Indre et Loire** http://www.departement-touraine.fr
05. Hautes-Alpes www.hautes-alpes.fr	**21. Côte-d'Or** http://www.cotedor.fr/cms	**38. Isère** https://www.isere.fr
06. Alpes-Maritimes www.departement06.fr	**22. Côtes-d'Armor** http://cotesdarmor.fr/le_departement	**39. Jura** http://www.jura.fr
07. Ardèche www.ardeche.fr	**23. Creuse** http://www.creuse.fr	**40. Landes** http://www.landes.fr
08. Ardennes www.cd08.fr	**24. Dordogne** https://www.dordogne.fr	**41. Loir et Cher** http://www.le-loir-et-cher.fr
09. Ariège www.ariege.fr	**25. Doubs** http://www2.doubs.fr/index.php	**42. Loire** www.loire.fr
10. Aube www.aube.fr	**26. Drôme** http://www.ladrome.fr	**43. Haute-Loire** www.hauteloire.fr
11. Aude www.aude.fr	**27. Eure** http://www.eure-en-ligne.fr/cg27/accueil_eure_en_ligne	**44. Loire-Atlantique** www.loire-atlantique.fr
12. Aveyron www.aveyron.fr	**28. Eure-et-Loir** http://www.eurelien.fr	**45. Loiret** www.loiret.fr
13. Bouches-du-Rhône www.cg13.fr	**29. Finistère** http://www.finistere.fr	**46. Lot** www.lot.fr
14. Calvados www.calvados.fr	**30. Gard** http://www.gard.fr/accueil.html	**47. Lot-et-Garonne** www.lotetgaronne.fr
15. Cantal www.cantal.fr	**31. Haute Garonne** http://www.haute-garonne.fr/fr/index.html	**48. Lozère** www.lozere.fr
16. Charente www.lacharente.fr	**32. Gers** http://www.cg32.fr	**49. Maine-et-Loire** www.maine-et-loire.fr
17. Charente-Maritime www.charente-maritime.fr	**33. Gironde** http://www.gironde.fr/jcms/j_6/accueil	**50. Manche** www.manche.fr

51. Marne www.marne.fr	**71. Saône-et-Loire** www.saoneetloire71.fr	**91. Essonne** www.essonne.fr
52. Haute-Marne www.haute-marne.fr	**72. Sarthe** www.sarthe.fr	**92. Hauts-de-Seine** www.hauts-de-seine.fr
53. Mayenne www.lamayenne.fr	**73. Savoie** www.savoie.fr	**93. Seine-Saint-Denis** www.seine-saint-denis.fr
54. Meurthe-et-Moselle www.meurthe-et-moselle.fr	**74. Haute-Savoie** www.hautesavoie.fr	**94. Val-de-Marne** www.valdemarne.fr
55. Meuse www.meuse.fr	**75. Paris** www.paris.fr	**95. Val-d'Oise** www.valdoise.fr
56. Morbihan www.morbihan.fr	**76. Seine-Maritime** www.seinemaritime.net	
57. Moselle www.moselle.fr	**77. Seine-et-Marne** www.seine-et-marne.fr	**Departments and overseas territories:**
58. Nièvre www.cg58.fr	**78. Yvelines** www.yvelines.fr	**971. Guadeloupe** www.cg971.fr
59. Nord www.lenord.fr	**79. Deux-Sèvres** www.deux-sevres.com	**972. Martinique** www.collectivitedemartinique.mq
60. Oise www.oise.fr	**80. Somme** www.somme.fr	**973. Guyane** www.cr-guyane.fr
61. Orne www.orne.fr	**81. Tarn** http://www.tarn.fr	**974. Reunion** www.regionreunion.com
62. Pas-de-Calais www.pasdecalais.fr	**82. Tarn-et-Garonne** www.ledepartement.fr	**975. Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon** www.cg975.fr
63. Puy-de-Dôme www.puy-de-dome.fr	**83. Var** www.var.fr	**976. Mayotte** www.cg976.fr
64. Pyrénées-Atlantiques www.le64.fr	**84. Vaucluse** www.vaucluse.fr	**977. Saint-Barthélemy** www.comstbarth.fr
65. Hautes-Pyrénées www.hautespyrenees.fr	**85. Vendée** www.vendee.fr	**978. Saint-Martin** www.com-saint-martin.fr
66. Pyrénées-Orientales www.ledepartement66.fr	**86. Vienne** www.lavienne86.fr	**986. Wallis-et-Futuna**
67. Bas-Rhin www.bas-rhin.fr	**87. Haute-Vienne** www.haute-vienne.fr	**987. Polynésie Française** www.polynesie-francaise.pref.gouv.fr
68. Haut-Rhin www.haut-rhin.fr	**88. Vosges** www.vosges.fr	**988. Nouvelle-Calédonie** www.gouv.nc
69. Rhône www.rhone.fr	**89. Yonne** www.lyonne.com	
70. Haute-Saône www.haute-saone.fr	**90. Territoire de Belfort** www.territoiredebelfort.fr	

List of local offices of the OFII

Department of residence in France	Send the document by post to	Department of residence in France	Send the document by post to
02 – AISNE 60 – OISE 80 – SOMME	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 275, rue Jules Barni – Bat D 80000 AMIENS	54 – MEURTHE ET MOSELLE 55 – MEUSE 57 – MOSELLE 88 – VOSGES	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 2, rue Lafayette 57000 METZ
25 –DOUBS 39 – JURA 70 – HAUTE SAONE 90 – TERRITOIRE DE BELFORT	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 3, avenue de la Gare d'Eau 25000 BESANCON	11 – AUDE 30 – GARD 34 – HERAULT 48 – LOZERE 66 – PYRENEES ORIENTALES	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Le Régent 4, rue Jules Ferry 34000 MONTPELLIER
93 – SEINE-SAINT-DENIS	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 13, rue Marguerite Yourcenar 93000 BOBIGNY	78 – YVELINES 92 – HAUTS DE SEINE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 221, avenue Pierre Brossolette 92120 MONTROUGE
24 – DORDOGNE 33 – GIRONDE 40 – LANDES 47 – LOT ET GARONNE 64 – PYRENEES ATLANTIQUES	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 55, rue Saint Sernin CS 90370 33002 BORDEAUX Cedex	44 – LOIRE ATLANTIQUE 49 – MAINE ET LOIRE 53 – MAYENNE 72 – SARTHE 85 – VENDEE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 93 bis, rue de la Commune de 1871 44400 REZÉ
14 – CALVADOS 50 – MANCHE 61 – ORNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Rue Daniel Huet 14038 CAEN Cedex 9	06 – ALPES MARITIMES	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Immeuble SPACE- Bât. B 11, rue des Grenouillères 06200 NICE
973 – GUYANE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 17/19, rue Lalouette BP 245 97325 CAYENNE	18 – CHER 28 – EURE ET LOIR 36 – INDRE 37 – INDRE ET LOIRE 41 – LOIR ET CHER 45 – LOIRET	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 4, rue de Patay 45000 ORLEANS
95 – VAL D'OISE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Immeuble « Ordinal » Rue des Chauffours 95002 CERGY PONTOISE Cedex	75 – PARIS	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 48, rue de la Roquette 75011 PARIS
03 – ALLIER 15 – CANTAL 43 – HAUTE LOIRE 63 – PUY DE DOME	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 1, rue Assas 63033 CLERMONT FERRAND	971 – GUADELOUPE 972 – MARTINIQUE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Immeuble Plazza Bvd. Chanzy 97110 POINTE A PITRE
91 – ESSONNE 94 – VAL DE MARNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 13/15, rue Claude Nicolas Ledoux 94000 CRETEIL	16 – CHARENTE 17 – CHARENTE MARITIME 79 – DEUX SEVRES 86 – VIENNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 86, avenue du 8 Mai 1945 86000 POITIERS

Department of residence in France	Send the document by post to	Department of residence in France	Send the document by post to
21 – COTE D'OR 58 – NIEVRE 71 – SAONE ET LOIRE 89 – YONNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Cité administrative Dampierre 6, rue Chancelier de l'Hospital 21000 DIJON	08 – ARDENNES 10 – AUBE 51 – MARNE 52 – HAUTE MARNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 2, rue du Grand Crédo 51100 REIMS
26 – DROME 38 – ISERE 73 – SAVOIE 74 – HAUTE SAVOIE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Parc Alliance 76, rue des Alliés 38100 GRENOBLE	22 – COTES D'AMOR 29 – FINISTERE 35 – ILLE ET VILAINE 56 – MORBIHAN	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 8, rue Jean Julien Lemordant 35000 RENNES
59 – NORD 62 – PAS DE CALAIS	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 2, rue de Tenremonde 59000 LILLE	974 – REUNION	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Préfecture de la Réunion Place du Barachois 97405 SAINT DENIS Cedex
19 – CORREZE 23 – CREUSE 87 – HAUTE VIENNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 19, rue Cruveihier 87000 LIMOGES	27 – EURE 76 – SEINE MARITIME	Direction territoriale de l'OFII Immeuble Montmorency 1 15, place de la Verrerie 76100 ROUEN
01 – AIN 07 – ARDECHE 42 – LOIRE 69 – RHONE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 7, rue Quivogne 69286 LYON Cedex 02	67 – BAS RHIN 68 – HAUT RHIN	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 4, rue Gustave Doré CS 80115 67069 STRASBOURG Cedex
04 – ALPES DE HAUTE PROVENCE 05 – HAUTES ALPES 13 – BOUCHES DU RHONE 2A – CORSE DU SUD 2B – HAUTE CORSE 83 – VAR 84 – VAUCLUSE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 61, boulevard Rabatau 13295 MARSEILLE Cedex 08	09 – ARIEGE 12 – AVEYRON 31 – HAUTE GARONNE 32 – GERS 46 – LOT 65 – HAUTES PYRENEES 81 – TARN 82 – TARN ET GARONNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 7, rue Arthur Rimbaud CS 40310 31203 TOULOUSE Cedex2
77 – SEINE ET MARNE	Direction territoriale de l'OFII 2 bis, avenue Jean Jaurès 77000 MELUN		

General Directorate for Foreign Nationals in France
http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr