

Global Immigration alert

April 2026

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France

Shorter residence permit processing times and rights continuity

Executive summary

On 5 April 2026, the French Ministry of the Interior identified workers' rights continuity as a national priority in response to long processing times in many prefectures.

The objective is to ensure that third-country nationals legally residing in France can continue to work and enjoy their rights without interruption, despite administrative delays.

Key developments

Changes include the following:

- **Priority for residence permit renewals:** Authorities (i.e., prefectures) are now required to prioritize the processing of renewals, in particular:
 - Employment-related residence permits
 - Professional immigration cases more broadly

This reflects a clear commitment to reducing situations where employees are left without a receipt or without the right to work due to prefectural delays.

- **Reduction of redundant checks:** For certain permits, notably Talent and intra-corporate transferee (ICT), where the employee entered France with a long-stay visa, authorities must:
 - Limit their review to public order considerations only.
 - Avoid reassessing conditions already validated by the French consulate.

This is expected to result in faster and more streamlined processing of employment-related applications.

- **Expanded use of multi-year residence permits:** Authorities are encouraged to issue:
 - Multi-year residence permits
 - Where applicable, residence permits valid for 10 years, as soon as the legal conditions are met, even in the absence of an explicit request.

This will result in increased stability for employees, fewer renewals and reduced operational risk.

- **Simplification of supporting documents:** Lists of required documents will be strictly regulated. Authorities will no longer be permitted to request additional documents beyond the official list.
- **Enhancement of digital tools (i.e., Administration numérique pour les étrangers en France (ANEF)):** Several major developments have been announced, including:
 - Automated renewal of application-processing extensions via ANEF, issued automatically while applications are under review, without required action from applicants
 - The use of artificial intelligence to review supporting documents
 - Improved case management within the digital tools
- **Exceptional staffing reinforcements:** 500 additional officers are deployed who are dedicated to processing renewal applications, which is expected to rapidly reduce the number of pending renewal applications.

Practices and processes may remain inconsistent between prefectures in the short term. Full implementation within local administrations will take time, and fraud prevention and security requirements remain stringent.

Impact on employers

These changes reflect a strong commitment to securing professional pathways for third-country nationals and reducing the social and operational risks for companies. Employers may update their internal processes and inform impacted employees about the changes.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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