JEANTET

NEWSLETTER

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Investing in France : Managing a French Company as a Foreign Executive: Visa Requirements Explained

EDITORIAL



France is a key destination for foreign investors, particularly those from the Middle East. Its economic environment, innovation ecosystem, and dedicated support mechanisms offer highly attractive opportunities for international entrepreneurs, fully in line with the diversification and internationalization objectives set out in the Gulf countries' Vision 2030.

At the same time, investing in France raises a number of practical questions related to company management. For example, Must a foreign executive reside in France? Is a specific visa required to manage a French company?

Our Middle East Desk assists investors and businesses at every stage of their project in France, providing tailored advice on local legal, tax, and regulatory issues. We guide you in choosing the right corporate structure, handling administrative procedures, and identifying key issues related to managing a French company.

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INTRODUCTION

For several years, France has multiplied initiatives to attract international capital and talent. Investors from the Middle East find a mature market, a skilled workforce, and a stable legal environment.

Beyond investment, the question of local governance arises: Is it necessary to live in France to manage your company? What formalities should be anticipated depending on the executive's presence?

Understanding these mechanisms is essential for a smooth setup and optimal management of your business

NO VISA REQUIRED TO MANAGE A FRENCH COMPANY FROM ABROAD

Contrary to common belief, it is not mandatory for a foreign executive (outside the EU) to reside in France to be appointed as the head of a French company (SAS, SARL, SA, etc.).

As long as the executive does not intend to settle permanently in France, no visa or residence permit is required. It is entirely possible to manage the company remotely from abroad and to travel to France occasionally with a simple short-stay visa (business or tourism).

However, the company must have a registered address in France and comply with all French legal obligations (registration, accounting, taxation, etc.).

The executive may retain tax residency abroad, provided they do not spend more than 183 days per year in France.

RELOCATING TO FRANCE AS A COMPANY EXECUTIVE: THE NEW "TALENT-COMPANY OFFICER RESIDENCE PERMIT"

WHEN DOES A VISA BECOME NECESSARY?

If the executive wishes to live in France and perform their duties on a daily basis, they must apply for a long-stay visa and a multi-year "talent – company officer" residence permit.

Since the decree of June 15, 2025 (No. 2025-539), this permit benefits from a renewed framework, based on the Immigration Law of January 26, 2024, and EU Directive 2021/1883.

KEY CONDITIONS

- At least 3 months of seniority in a company of the same group (as employee or company officer);
- Official appointment as the legal representative of a French company;
- Proof of sufficient resources (at least €64,864.80 gross/year).

SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURE

- Application submitted online or at the relevant French consulate;
- Issuance of a long-stay visa serving as a residence permit (VLS-TS) for the initial stay, then a "talent" residence permit valid for up to 4 years, renewable;
- Maximum processing time: 90 days;
- Family members benefit from synchronized issuance and harmonized duration of their residence permits.

ADVANTAGES

- Right to work in France and manage the company;
- Facilitated family mobility;
- Eligibility for a 10-year resident card after 5 years of regular stay.

PRACTICAL ADVICE AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Distinguish between administrative and personal residence: The company must always have an address in France, but the executive may reside abroad unless they wish to relocate permanently.
- Anticipate tax consequences: Spending more than 183 days per year in France may trigger a change in tax residency and additional reporting obligations.
- Prepare necessary documentation: For any residence permit application, it is essential to anticipate the required documents (appointment, resources, group affiliation, etc.).
- Seek professional guidance: The regulatory environment is evolving rapidly; specialized legal support helps secure every stage of the project.

HOW JEANTET'S MIDDLE EAST DESK SUPPORTS YOU?

Jeantet's Middle East Desk advises you at every stage:

- Selection of the investment vehicle and structuring of your company,
- Analysis of legal, tax, and regulatory risks,
- Assistance with international mobility procedures and compliance.

Our team, led by two experienced lawyers, combines expertise in international business law, in-depth knowledge of Gulf jurisdictions, and a strong local network in France.

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