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SINTES DINGAMGOTO LAW FIRM

Sintes Dingamgoto

ATTORNEY AT THE PARIS AND CHAD BARS

Talent Passport

The foreign entrepreneur's guide to France

"Three routes, one card. Choosing the right one from the outset determines 80% of your file's success."

PARIS · 2026

No jargon,

what you really need to know

You want to set up your company in France and settle here for the long term, but the Talent Passport seems opaque. That is understandable. Online, you will find as many contradictory answers as pages you read.

This guide sets things straight in a few pages: the three routes open to a foreign entrepreneur, the one I recommend to most of my clients, and the pitfalls that turn a file into a refusal.

> *"No copying and pasting from the statute book. What you need to understand to decide, and nothing more."*

By the end, you will know where your project stands, which route the French authorities are most likely to accept, and what budget to plan for a lawyer's support. If you then have specific questions about your situation, the first 30-minute appointment is free of charge.

Maître Sintes Dingamgoto

PARIS · 2026

Overview

the routes, in order of importance

There are three routes for a foreign entrepreneur who wants to set up a company in France. All lead to the same 4-year residence permit, but each suits a different profile. One alternative exists outside the Talent Passport – less favourable, but sometimes the only option.

MAIN ROUTE

MAIN ROUTE · MOST WIDELY USED · ART. L. 421-16, 1° CESEDA

Setting up or taking over a business – €30,000 in funding

The preferred route for a foreign entrepreneur with a serious, credible project. **4-year residence permit, right to work, spouse and children covered, spouse allowed to work.** This is the route I recommend to most of my clients and the one the firm uses most often.

TWO OTHER TALENT PASSPORT ROUTES

ROUTE 2 · ART. L. 421-16, 2°

Innovative project

For projects recognised as innovative by a public body. No €30,000 threshold. Recognition as innovative is demanding.

ROUTE 3 · ART. L. 421-16, 3°

Investment

For investors putting funds into a French company (at least 30% of the share capital) with a commitment to create or preserve jobs.

SPECIAL PROFILES & ALTERNATIVE OUTSIDE THE TALENT PASSPORT

APPOINTED EXECUTIVE

Legal representative of a subsidiary

For an executive of a foreign group appointed to head a French subsidiary. High salary threshold.

ARTIST & AUTHOR

Artistic profession

For performers or authors who earn most of their income from their artistic work.

OUTSIDE THE TALENT PASSPORT · ASSESSED CASE BY CASE

Entrepreneur / self-employed permit – a less certain alternative

Easier to enter (no €30,000 threshold, no degree required) but less protective: a one-year renewable permit, family not covered. It is meant for projects that do not meet the Talent Passport criteria.

Setting up or taking over a business

the route taken by most foreign entrepreneurs

THE FIRM'S CORE PRACTICE · MOST OF THE FILES I HANDLE

This is the standard route for a foreign entrepreneur who wants to set up a company in France and obtain a stable residence permit. It combines three decisive advantages: a 4-year permit from the first issue, the immediate right to work, and the option of bringing your family, with a spouse who is also allowed to work. No other route offers this combination for a conventional business project.

REQUIRED PROFILE

Master's degree – or **5 years' professional experience** recognised in your sector.

PROJECT FUNDING

At least **€30,000** available, documented and traceable – provided to a newly formed company, as share capital or as a shareholder loan.

PERSONAL INCOME

At least the **French gross minimum wage** (€1,867 per month as of 1 June 2026, around €22,400 gross per year).

PRIOR APPROVAL

The French authorities confirm that your project is serious **before** you apply for the visa.

PERMIT DURATION

Up to **4 years** from the first issue – renewable.

FAMILY & WORK

Spouse & children covered – spouse **allowed to work** from arrival.

WHY THIS ROUTE SUITS MOST FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURS

The €30,000 threshold is **clear, easy to document and predictable**. Prior administrative approval secures the review and reduces the uncertainty at the prefecture. The permit is **multi-year from the first visa** and immediately opens family rights, with a spouse allowed to work.

New company or takeover? The Talent Passport is designed for setting up a business. A takeover can still qualify in one specific case: a **newly formed company**, set up for the purpose, acquires the **going concern**, and the funding of at least €30,000 is provided to that company. A direct purchase of shares or of a business by you personally falls instead under the entrepreneur / self-employed permit. The authorities assess each file: the structure must be prepared with care, and the deed of sale is signed only once the permit has been granted.

Innovation & Investment

for specific profiles

Alongside the main route, there are two more specific routes. They lead to the same 4-year permit with the same rights (work, family), but the entry conditions differ. These files are more demanding to prepare – I take them on case by case.

CRITERION	INNOVATION ROUTE	INVESTMENT ROUTE
Who is it for?	Entrepreneurs with a project recognised as innovative (deep tech, biotech, AI, etc.).	Investors putting funds into a French company.
Key condition	The project must be recognised as **innovative** by the French Ministry of the Economy.	Personal investment, or through a company you run, with **at least 30% of the share capital**.
Money	No €30,000 threshold. Personal income ≥ French gross minimum wage.	Minimum amount + commitment to create or preserve jobs.
Difficulty	Recognition as innovative is demanding.	The permit may be withdrawn if the project does not start within a year.

THE CARPA CERTIFICATE – YOUR STRONGEST ASSET

Your funds are deposited with CARPA (the Paris Bar's regulated client-funds account), which issues a certificate of deposit. This spares you from opening a French bank account *before* you have your visa – a classic deadlock that this mechanism resolves. The CARPA certificate is recognised by the authorities and secures the traceability of your funds.

WHAT THE THREE TALENT PASSPORT ROUTES HAVE IN COMMON

4 years	Work	Family
Permit duration from the first visa	No work permit required	Spouse & children covered – spouse allowed to work

When the Talent Passport

does not fit your project

Alternative · Entrepreneur / self-employed permit

(Art. L. 421-5 CESEDA)

If you have neither a Master's degree nor 5 years' recognised experience, or if your funding is below €30,000, the Talent Passport is not open to you. Another permit then exists, the "entrepreneur / self-employed permit", easier to obtain but far less protective.

WHAT IT OFFERS

No €30,000 threshold, no degree required.

WHAT IT COSTS YOU

A **one-year** renewable permit only – legal instability, annual renewals.

FAMILY

Spouse and children **not covered** – they fall under standard family reunification, which is slower and more restrictive.

WHEN TO USE IT

When the project is viable but the **€30,000 threshold** or the degree requirement is not met.

This route is assessed case by case. It is far less certain than the Talent Passport: prefecture practice varies from one département to another, and annual renewal exposes you to greater risk. If your project is a takeover, it all depends on the structure: a newly formed company acquiring the business may fall under the Talent Passport; a direct purchase of shares or of a business falls under this route.

Special Talent Passport profiles

PROFILE	WHO IS IT FOR?	MAIN CONDITION
Appointed executive	Executive of a foreign group appointed to head its French subsidiary.	High salary threshold.
Artist & author	Performer, author or creator earning most of their income from artistic work.	At least 51% of income from artistic work. Employed and/or self-employed. 4-year permit.

Decision table

choosing the right route from the outset

The table below matches the typical profiles I see in practice with the relevant route. It is no substitute for an individual assessment, but it lets you identify in seconds the main route to explore.

YOUR PROFILE	RECOMMENDED PERMIT
Master's degree or 5 years' experience + €30,000 in funding + serious project in France	**Talent Passport – Business founder**
Project recognised as *innovative* by an authorised public body	**Talent Passport – Innovative project**
Investor (at least 30% of the share capital of a French company) with a job commitment	**Talent Passport – Investment**
Executive appointed by a foreign group to run its French subsidiary	**Talent Passport – Legal representative**
Performer or author with ≥ 51% of income from artistic work	**Talent Passport – Artistic profession**
Viable self-employed or commercial activity that does not meet the Talent Passport criteria (degree or €30,000 threshold), or direct purchase of shares or of a business	**Entrepreneur / self-employed permit**
Takeover of a going concern by a newly formed company, set up for the purpose, with funding of at least €30,000	**Talent Passport – Business founder** *(case-by-case review)*

THE 3 MISTAKES THAT TURN A FILE INTO A REFUSAL

- ✕ **Untraceable funds.** The €30,000 threshold is not just an amount: you must prove where the money comes from (gift, sale, loan), that it belongs to you (bank statements for the last 3 to 6 months) and that it is held in a reliable account (French company or a lawyer's CARPA account).
- ✕ **Generic business plan.** A plan downloaded from the internet, without figures or a precise study of the French market in your sector, will not survive review, and I do not file on that basis. The authorities want to see that you have genuinely studied your project.
- ✕ **Profile unrelated to the project.** If you present a restaurant project while you are a software engineer with no experience in the restaurant trade, your file is weak. The consistency between your background and your project is checked every time.

Method & fees

five stages · €6,000 flat fee in three instalments

I. ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

II. SETTING UP YOUR COMPANY

III. BUSINESS PLAN & FULL FILE

IV. FILING & CARPA DEPOSIT

V. FOLLOW-UP UNTIL YOUR ARRIVAL

SERVICE	FEES EXCL. VAT
Eligibility diagnostic (30 minutes)	**Free**
Additional consultation *for complex questions*	**From €250**
Talent Passport flat fee – Business set-up or takeover	**€6,000** *payable in three instalments*
1. *On signature of the engagement letter*	**€2,000** *non-refundable*
2. *On obtaining the favourable opinion*	**€2,000**
3. *On obtaining the visa*	**€2,000**
Second applicant – full file *co-founder or partner*	**€5,000**
Family file *spouse and children*	**€2,000**
Hourly rate (outside the flat fee)	**€300 / hour**
Innovation / Investment routes	On quotation
Entrepreneur / self-employed permit	**From €3,000** *depending on the activity and the transaction*
Appeal against a refusal *administrative or judicial*	On quotation *not included in the flat fee*

Fees exclusive of VAT, set out in a prior written engagement letter. Each instalment falls due when a stage of your file has been completed: you pay only as your file moves forward. Sums already paid are non-refundable; instalments not yet due are not payable. The flat fee covers the process up to the issue of the visa in your country of residence; appeals against a refusal, and requests for further documents beyond the first, are covered by a separately priced amendment. The flat fee may be increased where an existing business is taken over or a previous refusal has to be overcome. Services are not subject to French VAT as long as the client is established outside the European Union, which is the case throughout the process up to the visa.

Maître Sintes Dingamgoto

ATTORNEY AT THE PARIS AND CHAD BARS

"Free 30-minute Talent Passport eligibility diagnostic for foreign entrepreneurs with a business project."

calendly.com/contact-sd-avocat/talent-passport-en

OFFICE

79 rue d'Amsterdam – 75008 Paris

TELEPHONE

+33 7 55 79 84 66

EMAIL

contact@sd-avocat.fr

PARIS BAR ROLL NO.

D 1086

WWW.SD-AVOCAT.FR