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Return from expatriation: how do you get your french driver's licence reinstated?

Verified 18 mai 2022 - Legal and Administrative Information Directorate (Prime Minister)

You are back in France after an expatriation and you wonder how to get your French driver's licence back? We will tell you the conditions to be met and how to apply.

You have obtained a permit in Europe (EEA)

In what cases will the French licence be reinstated?

If you obtained a licence European (or a British licence issued before 2021) in exchange for your French licence, you can request the reinstatement of your driving rights upon your return to France.

This approach **optional**.

It **mandatory** only **2 cases** following:

- The **validity** of your licence **end**
- You reside in France and you have committed **traffic offence**

The reinstatement of the French licence concerns only **rights acquired in France**.

Example :

If you got **B permit in France** then passed **motorcycle licence at the foreigner**, you can only get the **French licence**. Regarding the motorcycle licence, you must request the exchange of your foreigner motorcycle licence for a French motorcycle licence.

What conditions must be met?

You must complete **3** following:

- Obtaining your French licence **before expatriation** (no matter your nationality).
The permit may have been obtained in one of the following ways: examination (code + practical test), conversion of a military driving licence, validation of a diploma or professional qualification issued for this purpose, exchange of a driving licence issued by a Com or New Caledonia.
- Have your normal residence **in France**
- **Not sanctioned** by a restriction, suspension, cancellation or withdrawal of a licence **in France and in the country that issued your foreigner licence**

How do I apply?


The process is done online on the website of the [CHILDREN](#) ().

 [Driver's licence to return to France after an expatriation: online application for reinstatement of french licence](#)

National Secured Securities Agency

Accessible with FranceConnect or **identifiers CHILDREN** ().

If you don't have one, you are asked to create an account to have a personal space on the ANTS website.

Go to
online service 
(<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/>)


You need the following documents, **photographed or scanned**.

However, the instructor service can request the originals if necessary.


In addition, **additional documents** can be requested depending on your situation.

Répondez aux questions successives et les réponses s'afficheront automatiquement


You are French

- Duplex colour image of original driver's licence
- **Certificate of identity** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31057?lang=en>)
- **Proof of domicile** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31847?lang=en>)
- **Photo Code and Digital Signature**  (<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/services/geolocaliser-les-photographes-habilites>)
If you don't have access to a digital signature and photo service, you can complete and mail a photo signature (FPS) form during the remote procedure.
- If you have **heavy permit** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N530?lang=en>), medical opinion of fitness for driving in heavy categories, or declaration of renunciation in heavy categories

You are European

- Duplex colour image of original driver's licence
- **Certificate of identity** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31057?lang=en>)
- **Proof of domicile** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31847?lang=en>)
- **Photo Code and Digital Signature**  (<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/services/geolocaliser-les-photographes-habilites>)
If you don't have access to a digital signature and photo service, you can complete and mail a photo signature (FPS) form during the remote procedure.
- Justification normal residence in France at the date of application.
For example, tax/non-tax notice on income, employment contract, social security certificate...
- If you have **heavy permit** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N530?lang=en>), medical opinion of fitness for driving in heavy categories, or declaration of renunciation in heavy categories

You have the nationality of another State

- Duplex colour image of original driver's licence
- **Certificate of identity** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31057?lang=en>)
- **Proof of domicile** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31847?lang=en>)
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If you don't have access to a digital signature and photo service, you can complete and mail a photo signature (FPS) form during the remote procedure.
- Proof of regularity of residence in France (residence permit or **Ofii sticker on your passport**) (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F39?lang=en>)
- If you have **heavy permit** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N530?lang=en>), medical opinion of fitness for driving in heavy categories, or declaration of renunciation in heavy categories

Can we drive while we wait for the licence?

While your request is being investigated, you can drive because you keep your driver's licence.

Depending on the complexity of your case, the instruction may last **months**.

At the end of the statement, your original foreigner driver's licence is required to verify its authenticity (unless suspended or cancelled).

You are contacted by SMS and email.

The e-mail explains how to send your original driver's licence in registered mail.

When the instructor receives the moose of your permit, you can **download on the site of the ANTS** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R61459?lang=en>) a **secure deposit certificate (ADS)**.


ADS is valid **4 months**.

This certificate **driver's licence pending receipt of your French licence**, within the period of recognition of your foreigner licence.

How do I track the status of the application?

You **follow the production and sending of your driving licence online**.

Once connected to your space CHILDREN (), you view your request in the dashboard.

 [Driver's licence: follow the progress of his driving application](#)

Accessible with FranceConnect or with your IDs.

Go to
online service [↗](https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/)
(<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/>)

Shipping driver's licence *Expert Letter*.

This is a secure shipment, with **hand-over against signature**.

- The address you specify during the online procedure must be as complete as possible (building number, flat number, mailbox number, floor, corridor, staircase, "resident", ...)
- Your mailbox must include the first and last name of the person receiving the mail.

If you are absent when the postman passes, you must go to the Post Office in the **15 days** with your notice of passage or with the number of the Expert Letter.

If you couldn't get to the Post Office within 15 days, you don't have to do anything.

Your permit will be sent to you.

In other cases, contact CHILDREN () via the contact form:

Who shall I contact

- National Secured Securities Agency (ANTS) - Driving licence

Online

<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/> [↗](https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/) (<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/>)

By Email

Access [contact form](https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/aide-et-contact) [↗](https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/aide-et-contact) (<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/aide-et-contact>)

Phone

34 00

Monday to Friday from 7:45 am to 7 pm and Saturday from 8 am to 5 pm

Local Call Cost

How long is the licence valid?

The **date of issue** indicated on the permit is the date of issue of the french permit.

From this date, the permit is valid **15 years**.

However, **the validity period of the permit is different** in the following 2 cases:

- In case **medical condition** requiring restriction
- For **"heavy" categories** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N530?lang=en>) whose validity is linked to the age of the driver. For example, 5 years for a driver under 55.

👉 **FYI** : the french licence that is given to you is **trial permit** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2390?lang=en>) if the original permit is also valid.

You obtained a licence in another country

In what cases will the French licence be reinstated?

If you obtained a foreigner licence (no European) in exchange for your French licence, you can request the reinstatement of your driving rights upon your return to France.

This recovery is **mandatory** in **3 cases** following:

- The **validity** of your licence **end**
- You reside in France and you have committed **traffic offence**
- You **continue driving in France for more than one year** following the acquisition of your normal residence in France

Recovery is for **rights you acquired in France**.

Example :

If you got **B permit in France** then passed **motorcycle licence at the foreigner**, you can get the **French licence**. Regarding the motorcycle licence, you must request the exchange of your foreigner motorcycle licence for a French motorcycle licence.

What conditions must be met?

You must complete **3** following:

- ▶ Obtaining your French licence **before expatriation** (no matter your nationality).
The permit may have been obtained in one of the following 4 ways: examination (code + practical test), conversion of a military driving licence, validation of a diploma or professional qualification issued for this purpose, exchange of a driving licence issued by a Com or New Caledonia.
- ▶ Have your normal residence **in France**
- ▶ **Not sanctioned** by a restriction, suspension, cancellation or withdrawal of the right to drive **in France and in the country that issued your foreigner licence**

How do I apply?


The process is done online on the website of the CHILDREN ().

 Driver's licence to return to France after an expatriation: online application for reinstatement of french licence

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
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In addition, **additional documents** can be requested depending on your situation.

Répondez aux questions successives et les réponses s'afficheront automatiquement


You are French

- ▶ Duplex colour image of original foreigner driver's licence
- ▶ French translation of permit if not in French
- ▶ **Certificate of identity** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31057?lang=en>)
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- ▶ If you have **heavy permit** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N530?lang=en>), medical opinion of fitness for driving in heavy categories, or declaration of renunciation in heavy categories

A certificate of driving rights of less than 6 months, with its translation, issued by the State issuing the driving licence may also be requested.

It is recommended to get it to have it available if necessary.


You are European

- ▶ Colour image of original foreigner driver's licence
- ▶ French translation of permit if not in French
- ▶ **Certificate of identity** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31057?lang=en>)
- ▶ **Proof of domicile** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F31847?lang=en>)
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If you don't have access to a digital signature and photo service, you can complete and mail a photo signature (FPS) form during the remote procedure.
- ▶ Justification normal residence in France at the date of application.
For example, income tax/non-tax notice, employment contract, social security certificate, etc.
- ▶ If you have **heavy permit** (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N530?lang=en>), medical opinion of fitness for driving in heavy categories, or declaration of renunciation in heavy categories

A certificate of driving rights of less than 6 months, with its translation, issued by the State issuing the driving licence may also be requested.

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Statute and miscellaneous references

- Route Code: items R222-1 to R222-8 (https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/section_lc/LEGITEXT000006074228/LEGISCTA000006159563)
Recognition and equivalence of foreigners driving licences in France
- Decision of 12 January 2012 laying down the conditions for the recognition and exchange of driving licences issued by States outside the European Economic Area (https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000025175223)
Reinstatement of driving rights upon return to France (Article 8)
- Order of 8 February 1999 laying down the conditions for the recognition and exchange of driving licences issued by the States belonging to the EU and the EEA (https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/LEGITEXT000005627531/)
Reinstatement of driving rights upon return to France (Article 8(1))
- Circular of 3 August 2012 on the conditions for the recognition and exchange of driving licences issued by non-EEA countries (PDF - 272.8 KB) (http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2012/10/cir_35951.pdf)
- Ministerial Response of 5 November 2020 on French and American Driving Licences (http://www.senat.fr/basile/visio.do?id=qSEQ200516003)

Online services and forms

- Driver's licence to return to France after an expatriation: online application for reinstatement of french licence (https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R56960?lang=en)
Online service

For more information, please contact

- Countries exchanging driving licences with France (PDF - 357.2 KB) (https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/---_liste_permis_de_conduire_valables_a_l_echange_09.12.2021---_cle8735a7.pdf)
Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs