



Reception and Integration Contract (*contrat d'accueil et d'insertion*)

January, 2007

A new Council of State decree dated 23 December 2006¹ specifies that, **starting on 1 January 2007**, all aliens allowed into France who want to settle in the country must sign a “reception and integration contract.” The ANAEM (National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration) will provide this contract (CAI) in French and in a language understood by the alien. The CAI must be signed by the alien and by the Prefect of the alien’s place of residence.

The following must sign a CAI:

- Applicants for “salaried employee” residence permits
- Applicants for “scientist” or “artistic profession” residence permits when they have permanent work contracts (CDI)
- Applicants for temporary residence permits for business, industrial or crafts-industry purposes
- Applicants for “private and family life” residence permits
- Applicants for “skills and talents” residence permits (once the implementation decree has been issued...)
- Applicants for ten-year resident cards who have not already signed a CAI

The following are exempt from signing a CAI:

- European Union, European Economic Area and Swiss nationals
- Foreign students
- Applicants for “temporary worker” or “seasonal worker” residence permits
- Foreign nationals who have had three years of secondary school in a French *lycée* abroad

The goal of the CAI is to make sure that foreign nationals arriving in France “assimilate into French society” (as mentioned in articles L 311-9 and L 314-2 of the Entry and Residence in France and Right of Asylum Code). This assimilation covers four aspects:

¹ Decree no. 2006-1791 of 23 December 2006

1. Good mastery of the French language.

Aliens arriving in France must now take an oral and written French test. Those whose level of French is not considered good enough must take **free French classes** offered by the ANAEM as part of the CAI. The training organization will provide the individuals with course “regular attendance certificates”. At the end of the language training, foreign nationals will have to take an **examination** to validate their newly acquired level of French; this examination will lead to issuance of a **diploma**. Aliens who fail the exam will be required to take it again, but it will no longer be free of charge.

2. Good knowledge of the institutions and values of the French Republic.

As part of the CAI, aliens agree to take **civics training**, provided free of charge by the ANAEM. This training is designed to raise awareness regarding “equality between men and women, secularism, state of law, basic liberties, safety of people and property” as well as “free, compulsory education” (article R. 311-22 of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code). The training organization will provide participants with attendance certificates.

3. Good knowledge about daily life in France.

As part of the CAI, aliens also agree to attend an **information session**, which is also free of charge, presenting information about “access to public services, particularly training and employment, housing, healthcare, childcare, school, school guidance, as well as volunteer participation in non-profit associations (article R 311-25 of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code). The organization responsible for training will also provide participants with regular attendance certificates.

4. Good professional integration.

Aliens looking for work will have to opportunity, as part of the CAI and provided for by the ANAEM, to have a skills assessment (*bilan de compétences*), which will be carried out and financed by the ANPE national employment agency.

This CAI is signed for a period of one year, the time judged necessary for language training, civics training and learning about practical life in France. At the end of a year, regular attendance at all of the training offered will be taken into consideration for renewal of the residence permit. In fact, article L 311-9 of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code specifies that “at the time of first renewal of the residence permit, authorities shall be able to take into consideration any clearly manifest disrespect on behalf of the alien of the obligations of the reception and integration contract.”

The CAI will be extended for another year if the language training is not finished.



Signing and respecting the CAI will also be very useful for foreign nationals who would like to settle for the long term in France and to receive a ten-year resident card. In fact, article L 314-2 of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code specifies that “issuance of a first ten-year resident card shall be subject to the alien’s assimilation into French society.” And the “assimilation criteria” is judged by signature and respect of the CAI.

Aliens who entered France prior to 1 January 2007 and who have not signed a CAI (because it was not compulsory) can do so voluntarily at their local government administrative offices. This is recommended for those aliens who seek long-term settlement in France.

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APPENDIX

Articles R 311-19 and following of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code

Article R 311-19. - I. - The reception and integration contract (*contrat d'accueil et d'insertion*) provided for by article L. 311-9 shall be signed by aliens mentioned in the first paragraph of this article, subject to them not being nationals of a member state of the European Union, of a country having signed the European Economic Area agreement, or of the Swiss Confederation and that they fulfil the required conditions to be granted:

- a) A temporary residence permit bearing the designation "scientist" in application of article L. 313-8, upon presentation of a permanent contract (*contract à durée indéterminée*);
- b) A temporary residence permit bearing the designation "artistic or cultural profession" in application of article L. 313-9, upon presentation of a permanent contract (*contract à durée indéterminée*);
- c) A temporary residence permit authorizing the holder to carry out a professional activity in application of article L. 313-10, with the exception of permits bearing the designations "seasonal worker" or "temporary worker";
- d) A temporary residence permit bearing the designation "private and family life" issued in application of article L. 313-11, except for aliens covered in subparagraph 11 of that article, as well as article L. 313-13 and L. 316-1;
- e) A temporary residence permit bearing the designation "skills and talents" issued in application of article L. 315-1;
- f) A ten-year resident card issued in application of the provisions of articles L. 314-8 and L. 314-11, when the alien has not signed the reception and integration contract for another permit.

II. - Aliens who did not sign a reception and integration contract at the time of first admittance to reside in France, in accordance with the fifth paragraph of article L. 311-9, shall be allowed to sign the reception and integration contract, subject to their legal residence in France under one of the permits mentioned in a to f of this article.

III. - Aliens mentioned in the fourth paragraph of article L. 311-9 shall be exempt from signing reception and integration contracts upon presentation of a certificate from a head of a French secondary education establishment abroad where the alien when to school for at least three years, when that establishment is found on the list mentioned in article 2 of decree no. 93-1084 of 9 September 1993 regarding French schools abroad.

Article R 311-20. - The reception and integration contract shall be established by the National Agency for Reception of Foreigners and Migrations and shall be signed by the prefect who grants the residence permit. However, for aliens who entered France legally between the ages of 16 and 18, the contract shall be signed by the prefect of the alien's place of residence.

The agency shall present the contract, with a translation into a language understood by the alien, during an individual interview. Following this interview, the contract shall be signed by the alien and, where applicable, by his/her legal representative legally admitted to reside in France.

Article R 311-21. - The National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration shall organize and finance the training and services provided as part of the reception and integration contract mentioned in article L. 311-9, with the exception of the professional skills assessment. The agency shall ensure the alien's registration in the training and monitor attendance.

Article R 311-22. - The civics training mentioned in article L. 311-9 shall include a presentation of French institutions and values of the French republic, particularly with regards to equality between men and women, secularism, state of law, basic liberties and safety of people and property, as well as rights of citizenship that allow, especially, access to free, compulsory education. An order from the minister in charge of integration shall set the maximum and minimum time periods required for this training. The alien's participation in this training shall be recorded by a nominative certificate established by the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration and shall be issued to the alien by the organization responsible for the training.

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Article R 311-23. - During the interview mentioned in article R. 311-20, the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration shall judge the alien's understanding of the French language using an oral and written French language test, defined by order of the minister in charge of integration, making it possible to evaluate the alien's expression and understanding regarding daily life activities.

Aliens who receive a grade equal or higher than the level set by the order shall receive a ministerial certificate exempting them from language training. Mention shall be made on the document provided for in article R. 311-29. This document shall certify, at the date of the interview, a satisfactory mastery of the French language provided for by article L. 311-9 as well as a sufficient knowledge of the French language provided for in article L. 314-2.

Article R 311-24. - When the level mentioned in article R. 311-23 is not reached, the reception and integration contract shall require the alien to follow training designed for French language learning. The agency shall propose an organization capable of providing this training. The length of the prescribed language training shall be established based on the needs determined by the test results and the individual's learning capacities. The length of training shall not exceed four hundred hours.

The alien's regular attendance shall be certified by a nominative certificate established by the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration following the prescribed training, based on the information provided by the organization responsible for the training. The National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration shall give this certificate to the alien.

The French language skills acquired during the language training shall be validated by an initial French language diploma provided for in article D. 338-23 of the Education Code and granted following an examination that shall include both written and oral tests. This diploma shall certify the satisfactory mastery of the French language provided for by article L. 311-9 as well as the sufficient knowledge of the French language provided for in article L. 314-2.

Aliens who sign the contract shall only be allowed to take the examination leading to the diploma free of charge one time.

Article R 311-25. - Aliens shall attend the information session on life in France mentioned in article L. 311-9, designed based on their needs. This session shall provide the contract signatory with knowledge about practical life in France and access to public services, notably with regards to training and employment, housing, healthcare, childcare, school and school guidance, as well as volunteer participation in non-profit associations. An order from the minister in charge of integration shall set the maximum and minimum time periods required for this training. Following this session, the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration shall issue an attendance certificate to the alien, based on the information received from the organization responsible for the training.

Article R 311-26. - When an alien who has signed the reception and integration contract is registered as a job seeker, he/she shall be able, upon request and with a prescription from the National Employment Agency which shall be responsible for financing the measure, to have an in-depth skills assessment taking into consideration his/her personal situation and professional experience. This service shall be designed to allow the alien to build or reorient his/her employment project.

Article R 311-27. - The reception and integration contract shall be signed for a period of one year. Subject to the alien being granted renewal of his/her residence permit, the contract could be prolonged by the prefect upon the suggestion of the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration within the limitation of one additional year. Extension shall be automatic and the contract renewed by tacit agreement when the prescribed language training, duly attended, is in process at the term of the first year of the contract. The contract could also be extended in cases where the training is differed for a reason recognized to be legitimate. Mention of the extension, as well as its reasons and length, shall be made on the contract. Closing of the contract shall take place within the month following the end of the prescribed length of training, whether or not the linguistic skills acquired are validated, or, at the latest, one full day after the date scheduled for the examination session leading to delivery of the diploma.

Article R 311-28. - The prefect shall have the power to terminate the contract upon suggestion of the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration when the latter notes that without legitimate reasons, the alien is not or is no longer participating in the prescribed training. The prefect shall inform the alien of his intention to terminate the contract and ask the latter to present his/her observations within a period of one month. He shall indicate the reasons for the planned termination and shall specify the consequences with regards to the measures

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regarding first renewal of the residence permit provided for in article L. 311-9 as well as evaluation of the assimilation into French society criteria provided for by article L. 314-2. The certificate provided for in article R. 311-29 shall mention this termination.

Article R 311-29. - At the end of the contractual period, the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration shall verify that the alien has fulfilled his/her contractual obligations notably with regards to the training attendance certificates and, where necessary, the information provided by the alien.

The reception and integration contract shall be considered to be respected when the signing alien has followed the training and information sessions, certified and validated under the conditions provided for in articles R. 311-22, R. 311-24 and R. 311-25.

The National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration shall issue to the alien a nominative certificate reviewing if the activities defined by the contract were followed and, where applicable, their means of validation. The nominative certificate shall be sent by the agency to the prefect of the alien's place of residence; the alien shall be informed that information was sent.

Article R 311-30. - Sufficient knowledge of the French language required, in application of the last paragraph of article L. 341-2 of the Labour Code, for aliens belonging to one of the categories mentions in a, b, c, and e of I of article R. 311-19 shall be certified and validated under the conditions provided for in articles R. 311-23 and R. 311-24, upon the alien's entry into France or within the two years following his/her settlement in France. »

Article L 311-9 of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code

Aliens, upon first admittance for residence in France or who enter France legally between the ages of 16 and 18 years, and who seek long-term settlement, shall prepare their assimilation into French society.

With this goal in mind, they shall sign a reception and integration contract with the State, which shall be translated into a language understood by the alien, and which commits the alien to taking civics training and, when the need has been established, language training. Civics training shall include a presentation of French institutions and the values of the French Republic, notably equality between men and women and secularism. Language training shall be acknowledged by a certificate of diploma recognized by the State. The foreigner shall attend an information session concerning life in France and, where applicable, shall have a professional skills assessment. All of these training activities and services shall be provided free of charge. For aliens between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, the reception and integration contract shall require the cosignature of the alien's legal representative legally admitted to reside in France.

At the time of first renewal of the residence permit, authorities shall be able to take into consideration any clearly manifest disrespect on behalf of the alien of the obligations of the reception and integration contract.

Aliens having gone to school in a French secondary education establishment abroad for at least three years shall be exempted from having to sign this contract.

Aliens who did not sign a reception and integration contract when they were first admitted to reside in France shall be allowed to request to sign such a contract.

A Council of State decree shall determine how this article will be implemented. It shall determine the length of the reception and integration contract and its renewal conditions, the activities provided for in the contract and the conditions under which they will be followed and validated, including recognition of acquisition of a satisfactory mastery of the French language and providing the alien with a document certifying regular attendance to the training provided.

Article L 314-2 of the Entry and Residence in France and Asylum Rights Code

Where the legislative provisions of this code provide for it, issuance of a first ten-year resident card shall be subject to the alien's assimilation into French society, which shall be evaluated particularly with regards to the alien's personal commitment to respect the principles that govern the French Republic, to the alien's actual

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respect of these principles and the alien's sufficient knowledge of the French language under the conditions defined by a Council of State decree.

Regarding evaluation of the assimilation criteria, the administrative authority shall take into consideration the alien's signing and respect of the commitment defined by article L. 311-9 and shall call upon the opinion of the Mayor of the municipality in which the alien resides. This opinion shall be considered to be favourable after a period of two months following the date the administrative authority called for the Mayor's opinion.

Aliens aged over sixty-five shall not be subject to the condition regarding knowledge of the French language.

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