



BIZ OÙ?

Setting Up a Business in France

Your practical business start-up checklist

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

Starting a business in France can feel like a lot to organise. Work through this checklist at your own pace, tick each item as you complete it, and use the Summary Findings / Notes space to record decisions, questions, useful contacts and things you still need to investigate.

1. Define Your Business

- ☐ Be clear about what you are going to offer and who you will serve.
- ☐ Decide whether you are starting a new business, becoming self-employed, buying a business, opening a gîte or relocating an existing company.
- ☐ Research your local market and competitors.
- ☐ Consider where your customers will come from and how you will reach them.
- ☐ Set realistic goals for your first year.
- ☐ Write down what success will look like for you.

Summary Findings / Notes

2. Choose Your Business Structure

- ☐ Research the business structures available for your circumstances.
- ☐ Understand the responsibilities, costs and reporting requirements of your chosen structure.
- ☐ Check whether your planned activity has any specific registration or qualification requirements.
- ☐ Get appropriate professional advice before making the final decision.
- ☐ Keep copies of important registration and business documents.

Summary Findings / Notes

3. Register & Set Up the Business

- ☐ Understand the registration process that applies to your business.
- ☐ Gather the documents and information you will need.
- ☐ Complete the relevant registration and administrative steps.
- ☐ Keep confirmation of registration and important reference numbers.
- ☐ Set up a system for storing business paperwork and deadlines.
- ☐ Create a simple list of ongoing administrative responsibilities.

Summary Findings / Notes

4. Plan Your Finances & Tax

- ☐ Create a realistic startup budget.
- ☐ Estimate your regular business costs and cash-flow needs.
- ☐ Arrange suitable banking arrangements.
- ☐ Understand your tax and accounting responsibilities.
- ☐ Identify an accountant or other appropriate financial support if needed.
- ☐ Keep business and personal finances properly organised.
- ☐ Build a contingency fund for unexpected costs.

Summary Findings / Notes

5. Arrange Insurance & Legal Protection

- ☐ Identify the insurance your business and activity may require.
- ☐ Arrange appropriate business, premises, professional or other relevant cover.
- ☐ Check whether you need specific professional qualifications or protection.
- ☐ Understand the contracts and legal documents you will use.
- ☐ Keep insurance certificates and important legal documents accessible.
- ☐ Seek appropriate professional advice where necessary.

Summary Findings / Notes

6. Find Premises, Equipment & Local Services

- ☐ Decide whether you need premises, a home office, workshop, shop or other space.
- ☐ Check that the premises are suitable for your intended activity.
- ☐ Plan renovations, signage, security and utilities where needed.
- ☐ Arrange internet and broadband.
- ☐ Identify reliable electricians, plumbers, builders and other trades if required.
- ☐ Create a list of trusted local suppliers and service providers.

Summary Findings / Notes

7. Build Your Brand & Get Visible

- ☐ Choose a clear business name and identity.
- ☐ Create a professional website or online presence.
- ☐ Set up appropriate social media profiles.
- ☐ Arrange professional photography where useful.
- ☐ Create clear information about your products or services.
- ☐ Make it easy for potential customers to contact you.
- ☐ Plan how you will build visibility in your local area.

Summary Findings / Notes

8. Plan Marketing & Customer Acquisition

- ☐ Identify your ideal customers.
- ☐ Decide how you will generate enquiries and leads.
- ☐ Create a simple marketing plan.
- ☐ Consider local networking and partnerships.
- ☐ Research relevant online platforms and directories.
- ☐ Plan how you will collect and use customer reviews and recommendations.
- ☐ Track which marketing activities actually generate business.

Summary Findings / Notes

9. Build Your Local Network

- ☐ Find local business groups and networking opportunities.
- ☐ Introduce yourself to relevant local businesses and organisations.
- ☐ Look for collaboration and partnership opportunities.
- ☐ Build relationships with suppliers and professional advisers.
- ☐ Connect with your local community.
- ☐ Remember that business in France often grows through relationships and trust.

Summary Findings / Notes

10. If You Are Relocating an Existing Business

- ☐ Review what parts of your existing business need to change for France.
- ☐ Understand French tax, administration and compliance requirements.
- ☐ Plan how customers and suppliers will be managed during the move.
- ☐ Arrange premises, banking, insurance and local suppliers.
- ☐ Arrange translation or administrative support where needed.
- ☐ Create a realistic transition timetable.
- ☐ Keep your existing business running smoothly while the move takes place.

Summary Findings / Notes

11. Plan for Growth

- ☐ Review your first customers and what they are telling you.
- ☐ Track income, costs and cash flow.
- ☐ Review your marketing and lead generation.
- ☐ Identify opportunities to improve customer experience.
- ☐ Consider outsourcing tasks that take you away from your core work.
- ☐ Look for mentoring, coaching or specialist support where useful.
- ☐ Set your next three business priorities.

Summary Findings / Notes

Explore Your New Business Area

Starting a business is also about getting to know your local area. Explore Biz OÙ?'s recommended **Places to Visit** and discover the communities, experiences and local life around you.

WHAT DO I NEED?

Need a local business or service? Use **Biz OÙ? Smart Search** to tell us what you need and where you need it — from premises and trades to marketing and everyday business support.

Your Business Start-Up Summary

What are you building? What still needs to be decided? What are your biggest risks or questions? What are your next three actions?

Important: This checklist is a planning aid, not legal, tax, accounting, immigration or professional advice. Business structures, registration, tax, insurance and compliance requirements vary according to the activity and circumstances. Always check current official information and obtain appropriate professional advice before making decisions.