



GOUVERNEMENT

*Liberté
Égalité
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Délégation interministérielle
à l'accueil et à l'intégration
des réfugiés

Information booklet for beneficiaries of temporary protection

Opening a bank account



Presentation of the booklet

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Opening a bank account makes your life and your integration easier in France : it is essential for accessing the job market, permanent housing, and your social rights.

This information booklet, done in collaboration with the General Directorate of the Treasury (Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery), the Banque de France and Directorate-General for foreign nationals in France (Ministry of the Interior), explains how to open a bank account in a branch in France and, in case that your application would be unsuccessful, how to assert « your right to an account » in the Banque de France.

It collects information, particularly regulatory and legislative information, which is already known elsewhere and makes it more accessible to a wider audience.

Why open a bank account?

Why open a current account?

A current account allows you to **receive money** (salary, social rights,...) and to pay current and recurrent expenses: rent, taxes, water, electricity, gas, telephone bills, internet subscription, transport card...

It also provides a set of banking services, which can be different according to the banks.

Means of payment available with a current account

Several payment methods are available when opening a current account (note that the bank is not obliged to grant you all of them): bank card, check book, direct debit, bank transfer.

You can also pay in cash, by withdrawing money from your bank or from an ATM machine.

Means to monitor your account balance

You can visit your account statement and the amount of money available in your account through the on-line applications offered by banks (available on computers or smart phones).

Useful tips :

Avoid being overdrawn (for example, having no money left in your account), as this can result in significant bank fees.

*It can also make your cheques invalid. "Uncovered cheque" can cause **banking suspension procedure**.*

The impact of Russian-Ukrainian war on banking operations

The Banque de France has conducted a [list of frequently asked questions](#) to answer your main questions and refer you to the right contact person. Below are some extracts.

I am an individual and I have an international payment card issued by a Ukrainian bank. Can I use it to make payments or withdraws from an ATM machine in France or the European Union (EU)?

Payment cards issued by a Ukrainian bank can be used in the EU: holders of these cards (whether Ukrainians or not) can pay to European or French traders and withdraw cash from an ATM machine, within the usage limits specific to each card contract. However, please note that the use of cards may be affected by the ability of Ukrainian banks to operate [...].

I have funds deposited in a bank in Ukraine, can I transfer them using an international bank transfer to a bank account in France ?

As for transferring funds from a bank account in Ukraine to a bank account in France or in the EU, there are no restrictions currently other than the ability of Ukrainian banks to handle the transaction in the current situation.

Bank fees for an international foreign exchange transfer vary according to banks and brokers. In a traditional bank, the price ranges from 15 to 50 euros for a transfer of 1,000 euros. These fees consist mainly of issuing fees, sometimes with a fixed amount (about 20 euros), a foreign exchange commission (fixed amount or percentage) and a premium rate fee (surcharge on the exchange rate). Finally, the bank where the beneficiary's account is held may also charge a reception fee or even a currency exchange fee.

The bank located in France or in the EU must carry out, when receiving these funds, checks required by law in terms of money laundering and terrorism financing (control over the source of funds).

For any questions about banking regulations or payment incident files, you can contact Banque de France by telephone (3414 toll-free call) or on its website (www.banque-france.fr / individuals section)

Opening a bank account

Steps to follow

Open a bank account - How to do it?

1. Going to a bank branch

To open a bank account, you can go to the bank of your choice.

At the counter, you can ask for an account opening form, in order to create a file and ask for opening an account.

Some banks also offer the possibility to submit your request on-line, on their website.

2. Submit your file

This file will include :

- **The account application form** provided by the bank ;
- a **valid official identity document with photograph**. For all beneficiaries of temporary protection, the temporary residence permit (TRP) given to you by the prefecture for a period of six months is sufficient to prove your identity.

You can also prepare a letter of application to open an account (see attached template) to prove your identity.

3. Additional information that may be requested by the bank

In addition to checking your identity, the bank must legally verify the purpose of your demand to open an account, i.e., what use will you make of this account ? (for personal reasons, for business purposes, etc.).

For management reasons, the bank may also ask you to provide proof of residence. For holders of a six-month TRP for temporary protection, your residence can be proven by sworn statement.

The bank may also ask you for proof of your income (work contracts, pay slips, etc...)

Useful tips :

- *The bank can offer you different packages, which may be subject to a fee*
- *Based on the package you choose, you may or may not be allowed to overdraw your account..*

How to assert your right to an account?

A bank can refuse to open a bank account for you. In this case, you can ask Banque de France to benefit from **the right to an account procedure** free of charge. Indeed, any person resident in France who does not have a deposit account and who has been refused to open a deposit account by a bank has the right **to ask bank of France to choose a bank** in order to benefit from a deposit account and free basic banking service associated with the right to have an account.

1. Requesting a letter of acknowledgement of refusal to open an account

When the bank refuses your request to open an account. It must provide you with a **certificate of refusal to open an account**. If the bank refuses to provide you with one, you must make your request in a written form (see model in the appendix).

As of 13 June 2022, pursuant to Decree No. 2022-347 of 11 March 2022 reforming the right to an account procedure, the absence of a response from the bank within 15 days of submitting the application will be considered as a refusal and will allow the applicant to refer the matter to the Banque de France even if the bank has not issued a certificate.

2. Creating your file

Your file must include the following documents :

- **Certificate of refusal to open an account** provided by your bank *OR, from 13 June 2022, proof of your application to open an account (duplicate of the application form to open an account, copy of the letter to open an account...).*
- **Right to an account form**, to be downloaded from [the Banque de France](#) website
- **Valid proof of identity** (temporary residence permit)
- **Address proof** (for example, water or telephone bill less than 3 months old, rent receipt less than 3 months old, housing certificate issued by an individual or an association, sworn statement)

3. Submit your request to the Banque de France

- by post to the following address : Banque de France
TSA 50120
75035 PARIS CEDEX 01

- by handing it over in the bank counters: appointments can be made on the website <https://accueil.banque-france.fr>

- on line via the Banque de France website: <https://accueil.banque-france.fr>

- by phone : by calling 3414

4. Waiting for the Banque de France's response

If the file contains all the required documents, Banque de France designates a bank to open the account within one working day.

As of 13 June 2022, (see decree N°. 2022-347 of 11 March 2022 reforming the right to an account procedure), once the bank designated by Banque de France to open the bank account is aware of its nomination, it must provide the customer with a list of the necessary documents and the contact details of a contact person within a maximum of three days.

The designated bank is legally obliged, including in the context of the right to an account, to verify your identity and to collect information on the purpose of the account. It may therefore request documents other than those given to the Banque de France.

If you do not provide these documents, the bank can refuse to open the account.

As soon as the file is complete the bank must open the account within 3 days.

*Useful tips : banking services provided **free of charge** as part of the right to have an account :*

- Opening, maintaining and closing the account;
- One change of address per year;
- Issuance of bank identity statements on request;
- Direct debit of bank transfers;
- Sending a monthly statement of transactions carried out on the account;
- Cheques collection and bank transfers;
- Payments by SEPA direct debit, SEPA interbank payment instrument or SEPA bank transfers;
- Means of remote consultation of the account balance;
- Cash deposits and withdrawals at the counter of the account-holding institution;
- A payment card, each use of which is authorised by the credit institution that issued it, allowing in particular the payment of transactions on the Internet and cash withdrawals within the European Union;
- Two bank cheque forms per month or equivalent means of payment offering the same services;
- Carrying out cash transactions.

Please note that the procedure giving the right to an account does not lead to the opening of an overdraft facility.

Focus on some of the supporting documents required in the different procedures presented

Identity document

To prove your identity to a bank, you can present a **valid official identity document OR your temporary residence permit** bearing the following « beneficiary of temporary protection ».

Proof of address

Proof of address is **not required to open an account**, which means that the bank is not legally obliged to check your address before opening your account.

However, it may ask you to prove your home address once the account has been opened, for practical reasons relating to the management of your account, for example in order to be able to send you information letters or your account statements.

If you are hosted in a temporary reception centre managed by an association mandated by the State, a sworn statement may be sufficient to prove your address.

Appendices

Glossary of banking terms

Useful links

Model letters

Glossary of banking terms

You will find below an extract from the French Banking Federation's glossary available entirely on the [site of FBF](#).

A

Agios (overdraft charges)

Debit interest charged by the bank, usually on overdrafts, calculated on the basis of the amount, period and interest rate of the overdraft, plus fees and commissions.

B

Bank

An institution authorised by law to ensure banking operations, for example receiving funds from the public, credit operations, and the availability of customers or managing the means of payment. The term "credit institution" or "bank" is also used.

Branch

The place where customers of a bank are received.

Banque de France

National Central Bank whose mission is to ensure the proper functioning and security of payment systems in conjunction with the European Central Bank. It also acts as an issuing institution. It also refinances credit institutions.

Bank card

A means of payment in the form of a card issued by a credit institution that allows the holder to make payments and/or withdrawals according to the contract with the bank. Related services can be associated with it (insurance, support, etc.).

Bank charges

Bank charges are the price paid by a customer for carrying out a transaction, supplying a product or providing a service. They can also be related to irregularities of how a bank account works or to payment incidents.

Banned from banking

A person who has issued an uncovered cheque (not regularised) and who is therefore no longer allowed to issue cheques.

Account statement

A document summarizing the transactions recorded on a customer's account during a specified period, usually monthly. It is recommended to keep it for 10 years.

C

Credit card

A payment card enabling its holder to make purchases and/or withdrawals using a contractually agreed credit.

Cheque

A standardised means of payment by which the holder (drawer) of an account instructs his banker (drawee) to pay the amount written on the cheque to the beneficiary. The funds must be available when the cheque is issued and maintained until it is presented.

Cash

A term used to name banknotes and coins.

Currency

Foreign currency.



Invoice

The invoice is the accounting document with which the seller requests payment from the buyer for the value of goods or services sold. The invoice gives a lot of information such as goods' description, its price, etc. It is the invoice that is used to calculate the taxes due.



Stop payment

A transaction that consists of reporting by phone or by mail the loss or theft of a cheque or bank card to avoid fraudulent use. You can make a stop payment in specific cases of loss, theft, fraudulent use and receivership or compulsory liquidation. If your stop payment is unjustified, you may face criminal sanctions.

Overdraft authorization

An agreement given by the bank to allow an overdraft of a specified maximum amount to be repaid according to pre-agreed terms, notably in the deposit account agreement or in a contract.



Transfer

A transaction in which a customer instructs his bank to debit his account in order to credit another account. It may be occasional or permanent.

Useful Links

The proof of accommodation from the Service public website:

<https://www.service-public.fr/simulateur/calcul/AttestationHebergement>

Right to an account procedure:

www.banque-france.fr (column Individuals/Financial inclusion)

Right to an account form :

<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R18275>

OR

<https://particuliers.banque-france.fr/votre-banque-et-vous/droit-au-compte/jai-besoin-dun-compte-bancaire>

To find the nearest Banque de France branch:

<https://www.banque-france.fr/la-banque-de-france/nous-connaître/implantations-de-la-banque>

Platform for Ukraine, for clear and translated information targeting displaced persons and refugees in France:

<https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

FAQ of the Banque de France

<https://particuliers.banque-france.fr/crise-ukrainienne-reponses-aux-questions-les-plus-frequentes>

Last name and first name(s)

Address

Phone number

Account number

Bank's Name

Branch address

At place, on date

Subject : Request to open a current account

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to ask you to open an account in the name of Mrs/Mr First and Last name

Please find enclosed the necessary documents including the opening account form.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Signature

Last name and first name(s)

Address

Phone number

Account number

Bank's Name

Advisor last name:

Branch address

At place, on date

Registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt

Subject : Request for a certificate of refusal to open an account

Dear Sir/Madam

As my request to open an account on DD/MM/YYYY has been refused by your services, I would be grateful if you could send me a certificate of refusal to open an account so that I can assert my right to have an account according to the provisions of article L.312-1 of the Monetary and Financial Code. For this purpose, I enclose a copy of my request and my identity document.

I would remind you that in accordance with the article R. 312-3 of the Monetary and Financial Code, any credit institution that refuses a written request to open an account must express this refusal in writing.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Signature