

French Foreign Employees

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On March 1, 2011, the Agreement on Temporary Employment of the citizens of one country on the territory of the other, signed between Russia and France, came into force.

With the goal of simplifying the temporary employment of the citizens of the two signatory countries, special procedures and processes for filing consent documents for employment have been established.

According to the text of the agreement, the goal is:

- to develop strong ties between the countries;
- to coordinate exchanges and cooperation between the two countries and to strengthen the high level of competitiveness of their companies;
- to facilitate professional mobility of the countries' citizens; and
- to broaden the practical professional experience of the countries' young citizens and to improve their language skills and knowledge of each other's cultures and societies by developing mutual understanding between the two countries.

A number of the agreement's provisions apply to young specialists, who are eligible to receive one-year visas free of charge that will grant them the right to enter and exit the other country for the purposes of employment. The possibility of extending a stay for the duration of a signed labor contract for up to two years from the time of entry has been established. In addition, citizens from 18 to 30 years of age may use the right of simplified entry to the other country in order to take a vacation for up to four months with the possibility of seeking employment and extending the stay for up to a year.

The agreement envisages a one-month period to process documents relating to work permits and work visas that come into force as of the date of receipt of the required documents from the competent state authorities.

In order to apply for a work permit as per the agreement, highly qualified French specialists who sign labor contracts with Russian employers must meet two of the following three criteria:

- have a diploma that demonstrates higher education in the profession indicated in the labor contract;
- have at least five years' experience in the profession and position indicated in the labor contract; or
- have a salary of at least 3,200 euros per month as indicated in the labor contract.

French citizens will also be permitted to travel throughout Russia without having to adhere to the formalities of the country's migration laws, if they do not stay in one location for more than 10 working days.

The agreement allows French citizens to apply for work permits outside the quota and without having to apply to the local job center for permission from the employment department to hire foreign employees.

This eliminates immediately several roadblocks in the process, as getting on the quota list can take up to a year, while an employer unfortunately does not always receive permission to employ a foreign worker.

French citizens will be able to apply for multi-entry visas good for up to one year with the right to a non-interrupted stay in Russia in order to work. They will also be able to extend their visas based on signed labor contracts without having to leave the country.

Documents allowing French citizens to enter and work in Russia will be processed in one month.

It is worth noting that there has already been success in processing these types of work permits for highly qualified French specialists in the Federal Migration Service of Russia.

The advantages of the agreement do not only affect French citizens, they also concern Russian citizens who plan to work in France. We believe that the agreement is certainly attractive to specialists who are seeking international experience and the chance to work with foreign partners as well as those who wish to improve their careers. Consequently, there are now new opportunities that are already being taken advantage of by the citizens of both countries.

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