

What is a SIREN/SIRET number and why do I need it?

If you have a Dutch company and you are doing business in France, obtaining a SIREN/SIRET number is useful. A SIREN/SIRET number is widely recommended as it certifies the veracity of the address, the activity, and the profile of the company. **In this document we describe what SIREN/SIRET numbers are, when you need them and how to obtain them.**

1. What is a SIREN/SIRET number?

SIREN and SIRET numbers are French identification numbers, allocated following an application for registration.

A **SIREN number** is a 9-digit number that proves that you have a fully registered business in France, listed on the national business directory – *Répertoire National des Entreprises*.

The **SIRET number** corresponds to the 9-digits of the SIREN number followed by a 5-digit NIC code. NIC is a reference to the head office or different secondary establishments of a company. Each company has only one SIREN number, but as many SIRET numbers as establishments.

An **APE code** (*Code d'Activité Principale*) is added to identify the main branch or activity of the company.



SIRET
- 14 numbers

SIREN Code
- 9 numbers
- Identify the company

NIC
- 5 numbers
- Establishment number

The SIREN/SIRET are assigned by the **INSEE** (*Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques*) and are communicated by the **CFE** (*Centre de Formalités des Entreprises Compétent*).

All companies are registered in the directory **Sirene** (*Système d'Identification du Répertoire des ENTreprises et de leurs Etablissements*).

2. Why do I need a SIREN/SIRET number?



A SIREN/SIRET number is mandatory in 99% of cases when doing business in France, in particular for tenders. In some cases, depending on the size of the company and the tender, a SIRET number is not mandatory. However, obtaining a SIREN/SIRET number is strongly recommended.

When you register a commercial company in France, you obtain a **Kbis extract** (excerpt of the Chamber of Commerce). Individual entrepreneurs obtain a K extract by following the same procedure. A Kbis provides information on the company's activity and includes all the information mentioned in the directory: name, SIREN, APE Code, legal form, amount of share capital etc. Kbis allows an entrepreneur or company to justify the registration in the directory, in order to prove legal existence.

This document is useful in many situations, for example opening a business bank account, purchasing equipment from a supplier, or doing business with the government.

It is not necessary to provide a Kbis extract when applying for a public tender, however it is useful. When applying for a tender, you will need to submit a file containing all the information requested by the buyer. Since these documents are often the only contact moment with the buyer, the applicant must pay particular attention to the documents and show he/she has correctly identified specific needs and is a serious partner.

3. How do I get a SIREN/SIRET number?



Obtaining a SIREN/SIRET number in France is a process that requires anticipation and preparation.

Submit a registration form to one of the six CFE networks of the department where your head office is located. Your CFE depends on the nature of your activity (commercial, artisanal, agricultural, or liberal), the legal status and the location.

Please use the following steps:

1. Create an account via the website: www.formalites.entreprises.gouv.fr
2. Click on “déclarer”
3. Create an account if you register for the first time, or login in via “se connecter”
4. Click on “déclarer un formalité des entreprises” From here on you can choose the English language:
5. Click on “créer une entreprise” or “start a business”

If you are unsure which legal form to choose, we advise you to get in touch with an accountant. The Netherlands Business Council France is in contact with Dutch speaking accountants who can support you choosing the right legal and fiscal structure.

The following official documents are required:

- Postal address in France
 - Complete legal and fiscal structure
- Note that a bank account in France is recommended, but not mandatory.

Your SIREN/SIRET number will be issued once you have registered your business. It takes two to three weeks to receive a SIREN/SIRET number.

If you have any questions, you can contact a CFE organisation, depending on the nature of your activity.

4. Which CFE to contact according to your activity

Your professional activity

- An Individual entrepreneur or company (EURL, SARL, SA - SAS, SNC) carrying out a commercial activity.

Your CFE

Chambre de commerce et d'industrie (CCI)
Chambers of Commerce and Industry

www.cci.fr/contact

- An individual entrepreneur or company carrying out a craft activity.

Chambre des métiers et de l'artisanat (CMA)
Chambers of Trades and Crafts

annuairecma.artisanat.fr

- An individual entrepreneur or company carrying out agricultural activities as a main activity.

Chambre d'agriculture
Chambers of Agriculture

chambres-agriculture.fr

- A liberal profession
- A company employing staff whose registration is not handled by another CFE (administration, local authority, trade union, works council, association).
- A self-employed artist creating content and work that is: literary and dramatic, musical and choreographic, audiovisual and cinematographic, photographic, graphic and plastic.
- A door-to-door salesperson, exercising his or her activity in an independent manner, not registered with the RCS or the special register of commercial agents.

Urssaf ou caisse générale de Sécurité sociale

www.urssaf.fr/portail/home/votre-urssaf/contacts-telephoniques.html

- A civil or non-commercial company (liberal practice company...).
- A public industrial and commercial establishment (Epic) or a public authority.
- A commercial agent.
- An economic interest grouping (EIG) or a European economic interest grouping (EEIG).

Greffe du tribunal de commerce ou du tribunal de grande instance statuant commercialement
The Clerks of the Commercial Courts

www.infogreffe.fr/greffe-tribunal/le-greffe.html

- Professionals working in groups, with or without legal personality (joint ventures, joint ownership, non-employing associations subject to tax obligations, trusts).
- Individual and non-professional lessors of furnished goods, not registered in the Trade and Companies Register (RCS).
- Individual renters of movable property not registered with the RCS (car renters, fund renters).
- Ship owners.

Greffe du tribunal de commerce ou du tribunal de grande instance statuant commercialement hors DOM;

Service des Impôts aux entreprises dans les DOM

www.infogreffe.fr/greffe-tribunal/le-greffe.html

www.impots.gouv.fr/professionnel/jexerce-dans-les-dom-page-en-cours-de-creation

- Companies for the transport of goods by waterway or fluvial cooperative society.

Chambre de la Batellerie Artisanale (CNBA)
the National Chamber of Artisanal Skippers

www.cnba-transportfluvial.fr

- A company or organization that does not belong to another CFE and has no obligations other than statistical and fiscal (and does not employ staff).

Service des impôts aux entreprises
Business Tax Services

annuaire.service-public.fr/navigation/sie

5. What will you obtain at the end of the process?

- Your **SIREN/SIRET number** and **APE code** assigned by INSEE
- The allocation of an **intra-community VAT number** by the business tax service (SIE), which is essential for all commercial transactions within the European Union.
- Registration in the **Trade and Companies Register (RCS)** for commercial activities, registration in the **Special Register of Commercial Agents (RSAC)** for commercial agents, or registration in the **Trades Directory (RM)** for craft activities.

For more information:

Embassy of the Netherlands in France: www.nlinfrankrijk.nl
Netherlands Business Council France: www.nlbc.fr



Royaume des Pays-Bas



Netherlands Enterprise Agency