Benezra Avocats

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Paris Bar · Nov. 2026

Injured?

In France?
A guide for
foreign victims

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Introduction

If you were injured in a road accident in France as a tourist, a business traveller or a foreign resident, you are in most cases compensated under French law, whatever your nationality. If you were a pedestrian, a cyclist or a passenger, French law entitles you to full compensation for your injuries in almost every case.

The insurer must make you an offer within eight months of the accident, and your claim can continue after you return home. This guide explains what to do, step by step, and how our firm can help you.

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Why it matters

FRENCH LAW

Even if you live in another EU country and deal with the insurer's representative at home, or go to court in your own country, your claim will in most cases be decided under French law.

LOCAL LIMITS

A local lawyer, insurer or judge does not apply the Badinter Law every day, and may not know the latest French case law or the revised Dintilhac nomenclature proposed in November 2026.

EVERY LOSS

A lawyer who handles French road accident claims every day makes sure each head of loss is claimed and valued by French standards, and can work alongside your lawyer at home.

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Your first steps



Get care first

Call 112, the European emergency number. Keep the initial medical certificate and every medical record from the hospital or doctor.



Gather evidence

Ask for the police report reference, photograph your injuries and the scene, note witnesses, and keep the accident statement, any rental contract and every receipt.



Sign nothing yet

Take advice before signing any document from an insurer: once you accept a settlement, you can withdraw within 15 days only.

Losses you can claim

01 Costs

Medical and care costs, transport, changed travel plans and the cost of help from another person. French law assesses each loss separately, not as a single lump sum.

02 Earnings

Lost earnings while you recover and in the future, if your injuries affect your work or career, as well as any impact on your studies.

03 Suffering

The pain you endured, any permanent impairment, scarring, and the loss of the sports and leisure activities you used to enjoy.

04 Family

If a loved one died, the family can claim for their grief, the loss of the financial support the deceased provided, and funeral costs.

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Key dates

An offer that is late or manifestly too low carries interest at twice the legal rate. If the driver is unknown, a claim to the French guarantee fund must be filed within 3 years of the accident. Court action remains possible for 10 years after your condition has stabilised.

8

months: the insurer's deadline to make you an offer

15

days to withdraw from a signed settlement

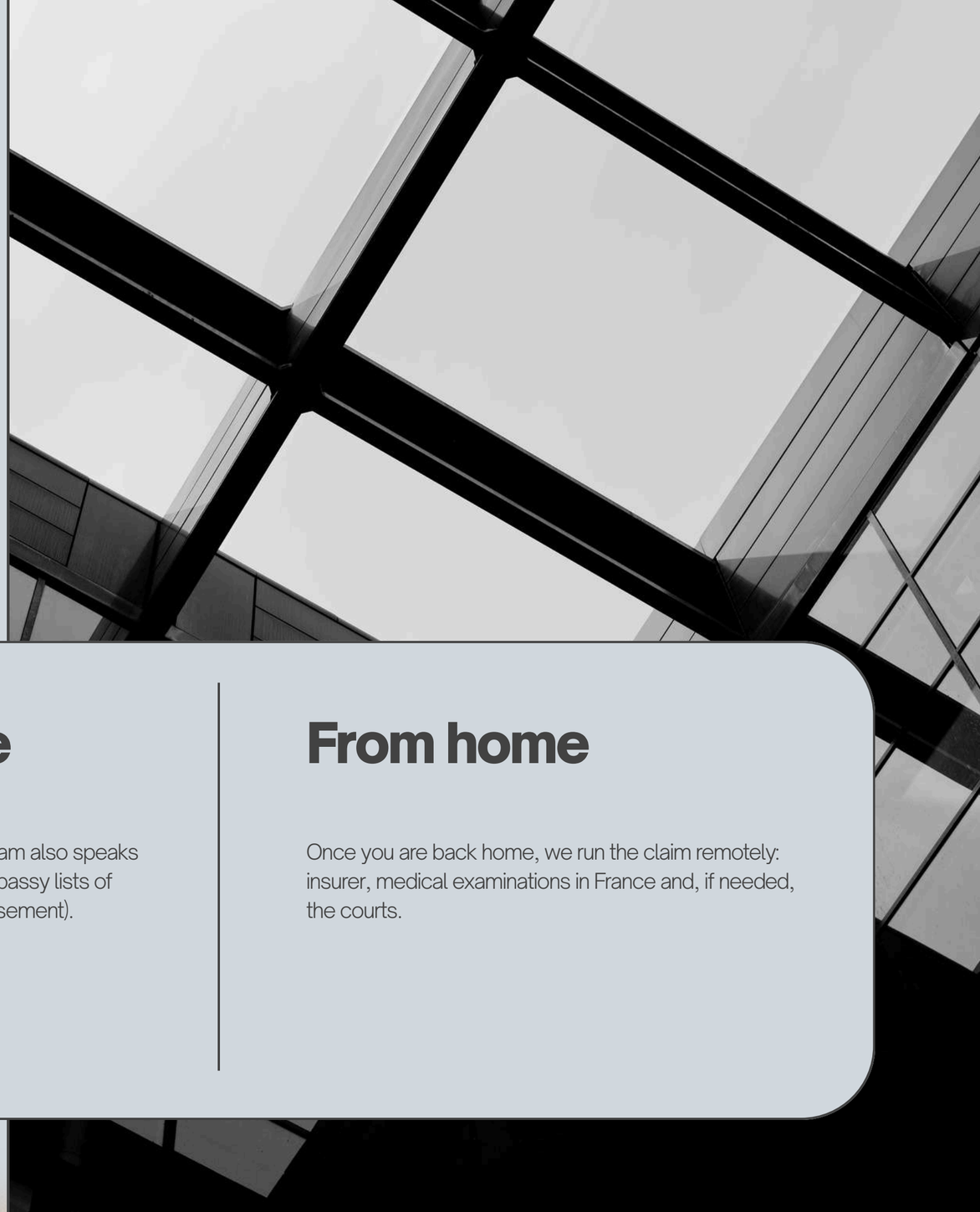
Fund covers you

- Driver fled or uninsured? The French guarantee fund (FGAO) may pay if the vehicle was French-registered.
- Eligible: French nationals or residents; nationals of Morocco, Tunisia or Switzerland; EEA nationals or residents; the Holy See.
- If the driver is unknown, the claim must reach the Fund within 3 years of the accident.

Not covered

- Other visitors, e.g. residents of the US, Canada, Australia or the UK, cannot claim from the Fund.
- The crime victims' commission (CIVI) does not cover road accidents either.
- The claim then targets the driver personally, plus your own travel or accident insurance. Get advice early.

How we help you



Victims only

We act for victims and their families, never for insurers. Over 20 years in road-accident claims and more than 10,000 cases handled.

Your language

We handle cases in English, and our team also speaks Spanish and Arabic. We appear on embassy lists of lawyers (information only, not an endorsement).

From home

Once you are back home, we run the claim remotely: insurer, medical examinations in France and, if needed, the courts.

Your claim, step by step

Accident

Get care, keep the police report reference and every receipt. Declare the accident to the insurer within 5 working days. A criminal complaint is possible within 6 years.

Exam

The insurer's doctor examines you, with at least 15 days' notice. You may be assisted by a doctor of your choice. The report is due within 20 days.

Offer

The insurer must make an offer within 8 months of the accident, which may be provisional if your condition is not yet stable.

Final

Once your condition is stable (consolidation), the final offer is due within 5 months. You can refuse it and go to court.

Fees

Our fees are agreed in writing before we start, in a fee agreement you can read in English. You pay nothing upfront: we are paid from the compensation obtained, so our interest is aligned with yours. The final terms depend on the complexity of your case.

First review of your case: free

Fixed fee: €1,000 to €3,000 excl. VAT

Success fee: 8% to 12% excl. VAT

Nothing to pay upfront

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Get help

Free first review of your case

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