



Au Pair in France

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BEING AN AU PAIR:

The au pair programmes in Europe are regulated under the "European Agreement of Au Pair Placement." **Placement as an au pair in France requires the approval of the Federal Employment Office.**

An au pair assumes the following responsibilities:

- supervising and interacting with the children according to their age and carrying out minor household tasks according to the wishes of the host family, for up to 30 hours per week (5 to 6 hours per day).
- babysitting for the host family up to two evenings per week.

In return au pairs receive the following:

- their own private room in the house of the host family.
- food and lodging free of charge.
- 60 €uros pocket money per week (in 2003), plus a minimum of an additional 20 euros per week towards course fees for French language classes-giving a **minimum total of 80 €uros per week.**
- the opportunity to attend a language course (compulsory for all au pairs).
- a monthly card for local public transportation or the possibility to make use of the family car in order to travel to the language classes.
- health and accident insurance.

Some au pairs give their opinion:

"To my mind, the most important is that when you are working as an au pair, you become responsible.", Zazarova Iordaniza.

"To be an au pair helped me open up onto the world."

"Each one of us found new friends.", Iwana Lewandowska.

"...I like the town of Annecy where I'm studying the French language, because there is a beautiful lake and a lot of majestic mountains all around us. I like the school where I study, because interactions among students and with teachers are excellent. We can speak about lots of things with our teacher. And thanks to the school, I've learnt a lot. I like the French language, I like its music pronunciation and I think it's the language of love.", Shlyr Veronique, Byelorussian.

"I was welcomed by a very nice family, the woman encouraged me a lot, she is teaching me how to pronounce words, but I'm finding it very hard.", Jane.

"Here, in France, I've learnt a lot of things: I've learnt how to drive, to ski, to climb, to speak French.", "I think that this trip was a good school for me. I learnt how to become stronger, hardiest, more patient, and I'm very pleased to be here, in France.", Lina Splepikaitė.

"I think that France is a very interesting and pleasant country. I like the culture and the customs because everything is so different from my own country and that's what I like about it.", Justina Wtodonz, Polish. "Bread and wine, this is what I like best in France...Then, It's a real melting pot and it seems to be working. I hope we will be able to experience this in Sweden too.", Jens Mangelin. "When I was working as an au pair girl, I had the opportunity, not only to make friends from several nationalities, but also to discover real France; not as seen as a tourist's eyes...", Anamaria Istrate, Romanian.

"I am very happy I have come in France because during this stay I learnt a lot, more than at school or by reading books.", Widetta Lysak.

CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

In order to be considered for an au-pair position you must :

Be between the ages of 18 and 26 (although the European Agreement states that au pairs may be up to 30 years of age, agencies and families will not accept au pairs over the age of 27).

Have previous experience in childcare (and provide at least 2 references attesting to this).

Have finished Secondary education (proof of graduation required).

Have sufficient French language skills (and, if possible, English).

Be available for a period of 6-18 months; for those who have to apply for a visa, this period must be at least 9 months. Short-term Summer and Winter contracts of 2-4 months are also available, depending on the agency.

Have a current and valid driving licence. This is very important as it will help you to find a family more easily.

Be a non-smoker (for the majority of families).

Girls and boys are accepted but boys are clearly less asked for and placement takes longer.

For many years we have been successfully placing young people in carefully selected families. We take care of our au pairs for the entire duration of their stay and they have a phone number where they can contact us during the day in case there are any problems. We organise regular meetings with other au pairs placed in the same region- these meetings take place in many towns throughout France.

What is Butterfly et Papillon International ?

Butterfly and Papillon International was created in 1992. Above all it is a competent, friendly and multilingual team with more than 10 years of experience.

The team works on the mobility of young travellers, which is a growing sector.

The team will take care of your application form and if there is a problem, the whole team will be there for you.

AU PAIR AND THE HOST FAMILY

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE HOST FAMILIES AND THEIR AU PAIRS ?

Working hours

Based on the European Agreement, an au pair may work a maximum of 30 hours per week, generally 5-6 hours per day. If the au pair is expected to work supplementary hours (for example during school holidays or if the child is sick), the family must offer supplementary time off as compensation. The family may also request the au pair to baby-sit for the children up to two evenings per week.

Care of the children

Au pairs have a big responsibility. The host family is trusting them with the most precious thing on Earth- their children. Seeing as the au pair will spend the majority of her/his time with the children, it is imperative for the au pair to like the children and enjoy spending time with them. Prove to the host family that they can count on you. Show the children that with you they have gained an attentive and enthusiastic 'big brother' or 'big sister'.

Flexibility

The host family and the au pair put together a detailed daily schedule for the au pair, listing the precise tasks to be carried out each day (also including working hours). Sometimes, this programme may have to be changed at the last minute. The host Family expects the au pair to assist them in confronting everyday problems and issues, which includes a certain amount of flexibility on the part of the au pair. Looking after the children is not a position with fixed hours. Some families may have to work weekends or at night, and the au pair is expected to adapt to this.

Participation and initiative

The host family expects the au pair to be motivated and enthusiastic in carrying out tasks. Do not expect them to always give you precise instructions, but learn to take initiative. For example, do not systematically place the children in front of the television, rather suggest some games or other activities you can do with them.

Perseverance

Working abroad as an au pair is not the equivalent of a holiday. There will be times when you feel very alone, upset with things that have happened and current circumstances, or you may feel homesick. You have to take the initiative to turn this situation around yourself- it is one of the challenges of living abroad.

Do not hesitate to talk to your host family or with a representative of Butterfly et Papillon International. Being upfront and perseverant will be the key to a successful stay overseas, and the whole committee of Butterfly et Papillon is at your disposition to offer help whenever you should need it. Realising that problems often arise due to misunderstandings or difficulties with the language, we strongly recommend that you request a written list of your tasks and daily schedule in .

Integration

At the beginning of your stay, you may feel a bit uncomfortable and ill at ease, not really knowing where you fit in with your host family. Being neither a guest nor an employee, you may find it difficult to separate your private life and your work, seeing as you live and work at the same time with your host family. The children will want you to give them the same amount of attention even during your free time. Speak to your family about this and try to find a solution which suits everyone. As a temporary additional member of the family, take the role of a big sister or brother. Don't hesitate to spontaneously offer your assistance in cleaning or tidying up, setting or cleaning the table, just as you would in your own home.

Tolerance

As you will be experiencing a culture which is different from your own, it is important to remain curious and open-minded. Some local customs may appear very strange to you, but that is exactly what allows you to expand your personal horizons.

Nobody is expecting you to appreciate and enjoy everything you see, but it is important to respect the culture of your host country and your host family (just as they will respect your culture). If you should have any problems in this respect, Butterfly et Papillon International will support you.

"Welcome to our country! I encourage you to read our brochure and learn about the opportunities available to work as an au pair in France with Butterfly et Papillon International. Every year we place over 100 young adults from all over the world in selected families. The entire committee of Butterfly et Papillon International is at your disposal during your stay. We take great pleasure in meeting and getting to know people of different nationalities. We hope to receive your application soon and above all meet you personally in one of your agencies."
Kind regards, Pascale DELZEITH.

WHAT CAN AN AU PAIR EXPECT FROM THE HOST FAMILY?

Time off

You will be granted a minimum of one day and a half off per week, including at least two Sundays per month. Most families give au pairs the weekend off, but of course flexibility is essential.

To be accepted as a member of the family.

Your host family will accept you as a member of their family and you will participate in their everyday lives, including joining them for meals.

Your own bedroom

Your host family will provide you with your own private bedroom.

Obligatory financial participation in language courses.

Your host family will assist you in finding an appropriate course which suits your time schedule. The family will contribute towards the cost of the course.

Accident and Health Insurance .

Your host family will take care of your accident and health insurance for the duration of your stay -100% coverage and repatriation (applicants must be in good mental and physical health upon arrival - provision of a medical certificate is obligatory for all applicants).

Paid holidays

If you work as an au pair for 6 months, you have the right to a 1 week paid holiday (the duration of your holidays will vary depending on the length of your stay).

Payment for transport

Your host family will pay for your transportation to and from language classes. The au pair is responsible for financing the journey to and from their host country, as well as any personal travel during the stay.

In some cases, the family may make a contribution towards the home journey if the au pair was employed with them for at least nine months.

Pocket Money

Au pairs in France receive 20 times the minimum wage totalling 60 €uros pocket money per week plus 20 €uros per week towards French lesson, in 2003.

The Statute for Au Pairs is not related to the Code of Employment, and you cannot define your working hours yourself. Your contract is a host contract, and you will not receive any payslips. You will be paid on a weekly or monthly basis (weekly is most common).

If you are paid on a monthly basis and for your enrolment in language courses, it will be necessary to bring some money with you to cover the courses, which cost between 6 and 8 euros an hour.

Families applying for an au pair with Butterfly et Papillon International agree to contribute 20 €uros per week towards French courses (you thus receive a total of 80 euros per week), but participation in the courses will vary depending on the type of course you choose. The family transfers the supplementary sum of 20 €uros per week directly to the language school during term. During the summer, the au pair receives this sum (Participation in a course is not obligatory during school holidays).

Generally, although in very few cases classes can be very cheap, the course is not allowed to cost less than 6 euros per hour for a group course. One term comprising four contact hours per week will thus cost at least 300 €uros. Your host family will assist you with your enrolment. Attending a language course is a specific requirement for your French residency permit, and you may be asked for a record of attendance if you apply for a permit extension.

* WHERE DO I APPLY ?

You must contact the local Au pair agency in your country who will pass your application along to Butterfly et Papillon International at:

8 avenue de Genève

74000 Annecy

FRANCE

TEL: +33(0)4 50 67 01 33

Fax: +33(0)4 50 67 03 51

Web sites: www.butterfly-papillon.com

www.au-pair-usa.info

E-mail: butterfly.papillon@wanadoo.fr

Butterfly et Papillon International works with experienced partner organisations (such as IAPA) in more than 30 countries around the world. Well-trained representatives of these organisations will provide you with further information about the program and be happy to answer your questions. After submitting your application, the agency will contact you. We will do everything we can to find you a suitable family. We accept direct applications only from countries where we do not have a partner organisation. If you are an international student with legal status already in France, we will process your application free of charge.

* WHEN DO I APPLY ?

You can apply at any time during the year. Most applications are processed between the months of May and October, with very few between February and April. The number of positions available for Summer varies according to the region, but generally applications for Summer must be submitted 3 months in advance and sometimes will not be matched with a family until a week before the planned departure date. In the summer there are always more applicants than there are positions.

LIVING AND LEARNING IN FRANCE

If you wish to work as an au pair in France, you have probably heard a lot of things about France and its people. Perhaps you have visited the country before. Some things you will experience as an au-pair may correspond to ideas you already had while others may surprise you. You will love some things and be critical of others. But come what may, your stay in France will be a new and unforgettable experience and you will meet a lot of interesting people.

Here are a few general facts about France and its people:

France is a very modern country, which is politically and economically stable. The population is approximately 60 million. The different regions of France each have their own traditions and central points (for example: the Bordeaux region, the Alps, the Mediterranean and, of course, Paris).

Butterfly et Papillon places au pairs in the Rhône-Alpes region which is the most moving area after Paris. The standard of life is very good, the weather is lovely and its geographic position makes it an important area (it borders Italy, Switzerland and Germany).

The French language

French orthography continues to be relatively difficult, but don't let this intimidate you and stop you from practising (think of the proverb "practice makes perfect"). The stronger your basis in the French language, the more rapidly you will progress once you arrive in France.

What the French value most

There are differing opinions about what the French value most. For the majority, their children are the most important aspect of their lives. Some love food and good cooking, but others prefer football or fashion. France is often considered the country of good taste: elegant clothes, succulent wines, picturesque cafés. The French lifestyle will cause you to fall under the spell of France and its culture. Mostly, this fascination continues for a lifetime and once you've visited France, you can't resist returning again and again. In summary, France today has many interesting aspects which you will certainly enjoy discovering.

A word about French cuisine

French cuisine is well-known for the diversity and quality of its dishes and sauces. It offers an abundant variety of cheeses, cold-cuts, pastries and wines. This variety also includes regional dishes. Don't leave without trying some regional specialities like Bordeaux escalope, Savoie tartiflette or Mediterranean ratatouille. Or, taste our 4,000 cheeses.

Work and free time

For French people today, work continues to play an essential role in everyday life - but less than before. This fact has encouraged and justified the development of many leisure activities. There are numerous possibilities for those who wish to relax or have adventures. Young people can meet up in bars or at parties, go shopping or go to the movies. It is possible to find modern-equipped gymnasiums virtually everywhere and outdoor swimming pools are very popular during the Summer. Christmas and Easter festivals are very important for French families, as are family meals.

CONTACT WITH YOUR HOST FAMILY

After receiving your application, we will pass the forms on to potential host-families. If they are interested, they will call you at home, in order to get a personal impression of you and to introduce themselves. This is an exciting moment for both of you. You should seize this opportunity to ask questions !

It is okay if you are nervous. The host-family will understand that it might be hard for you to talk on the telephone in their language. You may ask them to call you again later on in case you need some time to prepare yourself.

Here are some questions to help you:

- How many children do you have and how old are they ?
- Do both of you work full-time ?
- Do you have any pets ?
- Which region do you live in ?
- What do you do during your free time ?
- What would be my duties in your family ?
- When would you like me to arrive in France ?
- What is the most practical form of transport (closest airport, railway station, bus station...?)

PRE-DEPARTURE ADVICE

+ Improve your language skills

Once you have been accepted into our program and we have started to look for a suitable host family, there is still enough time to better prepare yourself for living in France. For example, you could use any time left to attend a language course. Also, through reading French newspapers and magazines you can familiarize yourself with the language and learn about the country. All of this will help you take on the role of an au pair.

+ Gain additional childcare experience

If possible, you can use the remaining time to gain additional childcare experience. Helping out at your local kindergarten or at a children's hospital as well as attending a first-aid course will provide you with all the self-confidence you'll need for your future duties as an au pair.

+ Save some money

Although your host family will provide you with free room and board as well as pocket money (60 Euros per week), you should still bring some money of your own. You might want to travel, go shopping, or go out on the weekends (movies, discos, cafés...)

+ Plan a return trip

If your travel itinerary is inter-continental, it is necessary to have planned a return trip which follows the end of your contract. We cannot accept anyone who buys a return ticket valid for only one month: **WE WILL SEND ANY APPLICANT WHO ARRIVES WITH THIS TYPE OF TICKET BACK TO THEIR COUNTRY IMMEDIATELY**, because if there is any problem after one month, the return trip will have to be covered by the family or the government. All applicants must purchase an open round-trip ticket, valid for at least 12 months.

+ The placement

Once we have found a host family who would like to accept you as their au pair, this is what happens next:

+ Confirmation of placement

Butterfly et Papillon will send you a confirmation-of-placement, a copy of the host family's application file, and, depending on your home country and local agency, an au pair handbook with useful information and other important documents.

Please read them carefully before returning the completed confirmation-of-placement to your au pair agency.

You will have to agree on a date and place of arrival with your host family.

For your stay in France, your host family will enrol you in a language school and request an "approval of placement". These two documents along with a copy of your high school/secondary diploma will allow you to obtain your visa from the French embassy in your country. If you have any questions after having read these documents, don't hesitate to contact our representative in your country.

+ Driving

If the family has asked for a young person with a driving licence, this means with driving EXPERIENCE. It is imperative to already have at least 100 hours of driving experience before your departure. It is also desirable that you use some of your free time to improve your driving. If you do not have enough driving experience, your host family will be obliged to enrol you in a driving school for at least 10 hours of lessons, at your own cost (40 Euros per hour).

Note: Because of the nature of insurance premiums, people who have had their driving licence for at least 3 years are in greater demand.

+ Visa (if necessary)

For those applicants residing in countries outside the European Union, it is necessary to apply for a visa at the French embassy in your home country before your departure. An au pair contract can be between 1 and 18 months, but a working visa can only be processed for contracts longer than 6 months, renewable once in France. It is illegal to travel and stay in France as au pair for longer than three months on a simple tourist visa - you will be expelled from France and from the program.

+ The journey and the stay

Organising and financing the journey to (and from, depending on the conditions detailed in the host contract) your host family in France is your own responsibility. Don't forget to inform Butterfly et Papillon of your arrival date and time.

After you have arrived, the local correspondent will give you a list of addresses of all the au pairs participating in the same program. There will certainly be other au pairs in your region whom you can easily arrange to meet up with. You are also cordially invited to our "au pair meetings," which take place regularly in various towns. Don't hesitate to seize the opportunity to meet other young people taking part in the programme and to get to know your host country a bit better. We will be very happy to meet you.

THE APPLICATION FORM

A complete application form consists of:

- the application form completed in black ink in French
 - a letter addressed to the host family*
 - a selection or collage of photos
 - Childcare references (at least 2)*
 - Character reference(s)*
 - Medical certificate*
 - 4 passport photos
 - A copy of your driving licence
 - A letter attesting to your level of French*
 - A copy of your most recent academic diploma*
 - A copy of your passport (if you need to apply for a visa)
- *These documents must be written in or translated into French.

APPLICATION

Please make sure that your application is complete before sending it to one of our partner organisations. Fill out the application form in capital letters with black ink, in French, so that it can be faxed if necessary.

Read the instructions carefully and make sure that you have included all of the documents (letters, photos, references) in order to avoid delays. We cannot accept you into the programme if your application is incomplete. Butterfly et Papillon International will use the information contained within (in accordance with the charter "Information and Liberty") in order to find you a suitable host family. Don't forget that your application is like your own personal display window and the family will choose you on its merits: thus it should be AS ATTRACTIVE AND THOROUGH AS POSSIBLE.

Be honest when you complete the application. We can only find a host family for you if the information provided within your application is correct.

How to improve your chances of being placed ?

The more flexible and open-minded you are, the faster we can find a host family for you.

The process of finding you a placement can be delayed if you have particular wishes concerning the location of placement or the age and number of children you wish to look after. In order to produce a successful application, it may help to imagine what it would be like if you were trying to find an au pair to care for your children. What would you expect from an applicant?

Photos are very important. Put a smile on your face and show different aspects of yourself (...with children, playing sports, cooking, gardening...)!

The more effort you put into your application, the better your chances are of being placed quickly. Don't hesitate to introduce yourself in an original fashion (photo collage, an audio cassette, a video, etc...).

Application requirements

* A letter to your host family

Don't forget to write a letter to your future host family. This letter should be 2 or 3 pages long, and will be passed on to the host family by the local agency. Take advantage of this opportunity to introduce yourself to them and talk about your hobbies, your plans for the future and your experience with children. Tell them why you want to visit and stay in their country.

* A selection or collage of photos

This selection of photos is like your visual "identification card". Include photos of your family and your friends and you with children you have taken care of. Attach them to 2 to 4 sheets of blank A4 paper and write a small commentary for each photo in black - please ensure that the writing is very clear as we only provide the host family with photocopies of the photo sheets.

It would be even better if you can provide two colour photocopies of the photos - then we could give the family a copy of the photos in colour. You could choose to present them in a more original fashion, for example in a photo collage - it's up to you !

* References

You must provide us with at least two references certifying that you have taken care of children, plus one descriptive character reference. These references cannot be completed by members of your own family. The childcare references must be completed by the parents of the children you have cared for, possibly with quotes from the children themselves. The character reference can be completed for example by a teacher, employer or a priest.

* Medical certificate

The medical certificate must be completed by your family doctor, and must include his/her signature and stamp.

"Send the completed application to the Butterfly et Papillon International . We wish you all the best for your application ! We look forward to meeting you soon in France."

Kind regards,

The Butterfly et Papillon Team

AU PAIR INSURANCE

Au pair positions are not to be accepted for the purpose of obtaining medical care.

Following is a list of conditions and cases not covered by the Au Pair insurance:

- * costs for treatment which could be postponed until the insured returns to their country of origin.
- * The costs of routine check-ups and tests
- * vaccinations
- * glasses, corrective lenses and contact lenses.
- * Physiotherapy, unless prescribed by a doctor following an accident.
- * Chiropractic, osteopathy, acupuncture.
- * Pregnancy and child-birth, unless first visit for diagnosis.
- * voluntary termination of pregnancy.
- * costs ensuing from civil wars, invasions, etc...
- * nuclear reactions.
- * mental or nervous sickness or depression.
- * drug or alcohol usage
- * suicide, self-mutilation or results of unnecessary risk-taking.
- * venereal or sexually transmitted diseases or AIDS.
- * non-respect of a regulation in the country where the insured currently lives.