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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Justice and Police FDJP
State Secretariat for Migration SEM



Working in Switzerland

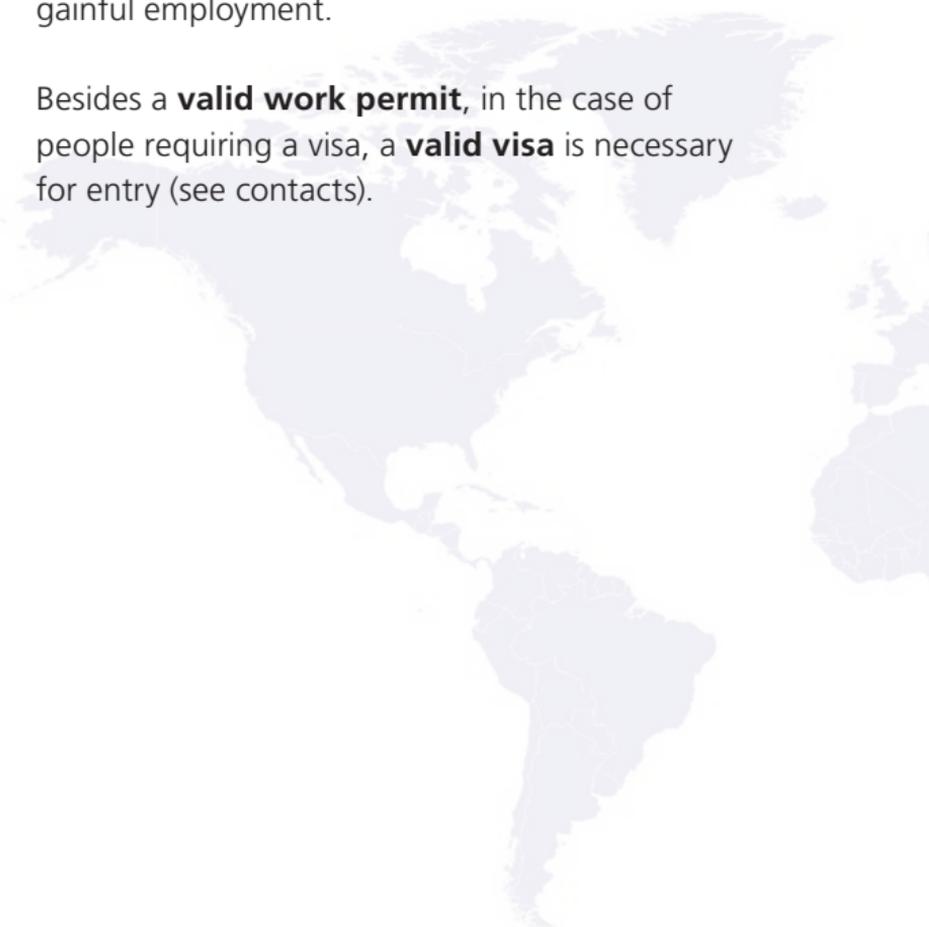
Switzerland as country of immigration

Switzerland, a country in the centre of Europe, has a long tradition of immigration. As a consequence of its stable economic and political situation, many multinational companies have their headquarters in Switzerland. Switzerland is a leader in research and development due to its renowned universities. Many people from different countries live and work in Switzerland on account of its stable job market.

Working in Switzerland

Anyone wishing to work in Switzerland needs to have a **work permit before taking up** gainful employment.

Besides a **valid work permit**, in the case of people requiring a visa, a **valid visa** is necessary for entry (see contacts).

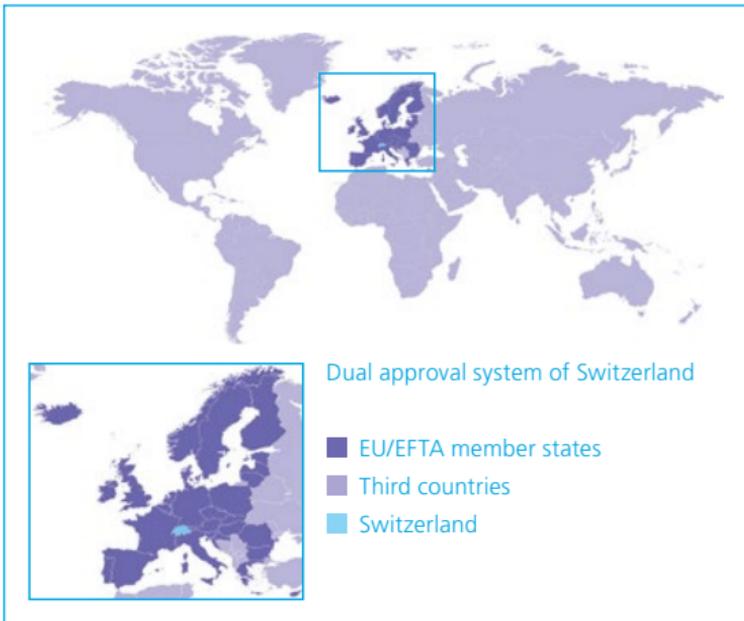


Who can work in Switzerland?

Switzerland has a dual system for the authorization of foreign workers:

EU/EFTA nationals enjoy priority in the event of authorization to access the labour market.

Nationals of all other countries (so-called third country nationals) are allowed entry to the Swiss labour market in addition to foreign workers from the EU/EFTA area, but have to fulfill the subsequent preconditions:



Approval criteria for third country nationals

1. Employees who do **not** originate from an EU/EFTA country can only work in Switzerland in senior management positions, as specialists or other qualified personnel. Permits are only granted in the **overall economic interests** of Switzerland.

A person with a **degree from a university or institution of higher education** plus several years of professional experience is deemed to be **qualified**. Depending on the profession or specialization, people with special training and several years of professional experience are also approved.

2. Foreign employees have a right to the **same salary and the same working conditions** as Swiss nationals.
3. Third country nationals are only authorized when no Swiss or EU/EFTA national is available for the job envisaged.
4. The number of work permits issued to third country nationals in Switzerland is **restricted** (maximum number).

8-day regulation

Basically, no permit requirement exists in the case of a transnational service provided for up to eight days per calendar year. However, a visa may be required for entry. Please check the applicable visa provisions. In certain fields (especially in the erotic entertainment sector), a **work permit is required starting from the first day**. Please find out for yourself at the competent authority whether you require a work permit (see contacts).

No work **without a permit**

Anyone working in Switzerland without a work permit renders himself/herself **liable to punishment** (imprisonment up to one year or a fine). The same applies to an employer who employs a foreign national without a work permit.

Anyone who stays illegally in Switzerland is **liable to expulsion** from Switzerland and a **ban on entry** to the Schengen area.

How and where to apply for a **work permit?**

In Switzerland employers are responsible for obtaining work permits. They submit an application to the labour market or migration authorities in the relevant canton. These authorities provide information about the procedure and the application documents to be submitted.

If you are having **problems with an employer**, contact the following contact centre:

- www.ch.ch

- Work → Employment law

- Labour disputes: Who to contact

- the competent cantonal authorities

Contacts

Swiss representations in your home country

www.eda.admin.ch

→ Representations and travel advice

Further information about the employment of Non-EU/EFTA nationals

www.sem.admin.ch

→ Entry & Residence → Labour / Work permits

→ Non-EU/EFTA nationals

Further information about entry and visas

www.sem.admin.ch

→ Entry & Residence → Entry

Cantonal authorities

www.sem.admin.ch

→ About us → Contact → Cantonal authorities

→ Cantonal immigration and labour market authorities

Illegal work:

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

www.seco.admin.ch

→ Topics → Labour: Travail au noir / Schwarzarbeit

General information about Switzerland

www.ch.ch

www.admin.ch