



Procedure to be followed by mountain guides with foreign professional qualifications before commencing work in Switzerland

1. Background

The legislation on mountain guides and organisers of other high-risk activities has been in force since 1 January 2014. The revised High-Risk Activities Ordinance came into force on 1 May 2019.

If you wish to work as a mountain guide in Switzerland – which is legally regarded as a high-risk activity – you must have a licence issued by the competent cantonal authority. In order to obtain this, you must be able to present a certificate of training recognised by the International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations (IFMGA) or by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications). You will also require professional indemnity insurance providing cover of at least CHF 5 million.

The procedures for applying for a licence vary according to citizenship and the duration of the activity in Switzerland. The various procedures for mountain guides with foreign professional qualifications are described below.

2. Procedure for professional activity in Switzerland

Service providers from the EU/EFTA working on a self-employed basis for a maximum of 90 working days per calendar year:

Recognition of professional qualifications:

If you wish to perform your service in Switzerland for a maximum of 90 working days per calendar year, you must submit a declaration form to SERI before commencing the activity: www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/declaration-procedure-for-service-providers-from-eu-efta-states This declaration is required as of the **first working day** in Switzerland and must be renewed with SERI annually. This declaration requirement applies to service providers who do not have a Swiss employment contract or a cross-border commuter permit or residence permit.

Notification under the law relating to foreign nationals:

If you intend to work more than 8 days per calendar year, you must also use the online notification procedure on the website of the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM): https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/fza_schweiz-eu-efta/meldeverfahren.html

Notification of each activity for which notification is required must be submitted at least 8 days before commencement of the activity. The notification rules may be found here: www.sem.admin.ch > [Entry & residence](#) > [Free Movement of Persons Switzerland – EU/EFTA](#) > [Notification procedure for short-term work in Switzerland](#)

Mountain guides from the EU/EFTA working on an employed basis in Switzerland for a maximum of 90 working days per calendar year:

Recognition of professional qualifications:

If you wish to work in Switzerland as an employee, you must submit your documentation directly to the canton in which you will mainly be working. You receive a four-year licence valid

for the whole of Switzerland in accordance with the legislation on high-risk activities if you hold an IFMGA diploma or a certificate recognised by SERI. If you do not hold an IFMGA diploma, you must follow the SERI recognition procedure: <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/recognition-procedure-on-establishment/procedure-at-seri/procedure-and-duration.html>

Notification in accordance with the law relating to foreign nationals:

The employer in Switzerland is required to report the professional activity of the mountain guide by no later than the day before work is commenced in Switzerland, via the online notification procedure on the website of the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM): https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/fza_schweiz-eu-efta/meldeverfahren.html

The notification rules may be found here: www.sem.admin.ch > [Entry & residence > Free Movement of Persons Switzerland – EU/EFTA > Notification procedure for short-term work in Switzerland](#)

Mountain guides from the EU/EFTA who are established in Switzerland:

Recognition of professional qualifications:

Mountain guides from the EU/EFTA who are established in Switzerland must submit their documentation directly to the canton in which they will mainly be working. You receive a four-year licence valid for the whole of Switzerland in accordance with the legislation on high-risk activities if you hold an IFMGA diploma or a certificate recognised by SERI. If you do not hold an IFMGA diploma, you must follow the SERI recognition procedure: <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/recognition-procedure-on-establishment/procedure-at-seri/procedure-and-duration.html>

Permit in accordance with the law relating to foreign nationals:

Persons from EU/EFTA countries who reside in Switzerland for more than 3 months per calendar year require a permit in accordance with the law relating to foreign nationals before commencing employment. They must register with the relevant municipality and apply for a residence permit. A permit is also required if services are provided for more than 90 working days per calendar year.

Mountain guides from non-EU/EFTA countries (third-country nationals) who are working in Switzerland:

Recognition of professional qualifications:

Third-country nationals must submit their documentation directly to the canton in which they will mainly be working. You receive a four-year licence valid for the whole of Switzerland in accordance with the legislation on high-risk activities if you hold an IFMGA diploma or a certificate recognised by SERI. If you do not hold an IFMGA diploma, you must follow the SERI recognition procedure: <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/recognition-procedure-on-establishment/procedure-at-seri/procedure-and-duration.html>

Permit in accordance with the law relating to foreign nationals:

Third-country nationals require a permit in accordance with the law relating to foreign nationals before commencing employment in Switzerland.

The permit must be obtained from the relevant cantonal labour market authority or migration authority before the employment commences. A professional licence in accordance with the law relating to high-risk activities is not a substitute for the permit required by foreign nationals. Information on permits in accordance with the law relating to foreign nationals may be found at: www.sem.admin.ch > [Entry & residence > Residence](#)

Aspirant mountain guides:

In order to be allowed to practise as an aspirant mountain guide in Switzerland, you must have passed the aspirant course of the Swiss Mountain Guide Association (SBV), an aspirant course recognised by the IFMGA, or a foreign aspirant course recognised by the Federal Office of Sport (FOSPO) as equivalent. You are allowed to guide clients in Switzerland provided that this takes place under the direct or indirect supervision of and in joint responsibility with a mountain guide licensed in accordance with the legislation on high-risk activities. In other respects, the same rules apply as described above for mountain guides.

3. Competent cantonal authorities

www.baspo.admin.ch > [Aktuell](#) > [Themen \(Dossiers\)](#) > [Gesetz über Risikoaktivitäten](#) > [Merkblätter und Links](#)

4. Other links

Swiss Mountain Guide Association (SBV)
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www.4000plus.ch
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Federal Office of Sport

www.baspo.admin.ch > Aktuell > Themen (Dossiers) > Gesetz über Risikoaktivitäten
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