



Regulation of professions in the field

Private security

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Introduction

Holders of foreign professional qualifications may pursue a professional activity for which they are qualified in their country of origin in Switzerland, provided they meet the legal requirements. This factsheet explains the current regulations in Switzerland governing individual professional activities in the field of private security. In order to carry out such activities, foreign professional qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates, etc.) must be comparable with the Swiss qualifications required by law.

The procedures differ depending on the duration of the professional activity in Switzerland: in the case of establishment in Switzerland, recognition of foreign professional qualifications is required before commencement of the regulated professional activity: www.sbf.admin.ch/becc

Service providers established in an EU/EFTA country, who wish to pursue a regulated professional activity in Switzerland as self-employed persons or on secondment for a maximum of 90 working days per calendar year, are subject to a declaration requirement. The professional qualifications are verified by means of a fast-track procedure: www.sbf.admin.ch/edeclaration

Some activities in the field of private security are not regulated. In other words, they may be carried out without the need for recognition of professional qualifications or any obligation to declare the activities to SERI. Employment prospects depend on supply and demand on the Swiss labour market. It is therefore possible to apply directly for employment or to accept jobs in a self-employed capacity.

1. Scope of application of regulation

Private security activities are subject to cantonal regulation.

a) French-speaking cantons

French-speaking cantons (GE, VD, JU, VS, FR, NE) have entered into an intercantonal agreement on private security activities. More detailed information can be found on the website of the «Conférence latine des Chefs des Départements de justice et police (CLDJP)»: www.cldjp.ch

Only the following three activities are regulated:

- Surveillance or guarding of movable or immovable property,
- Protection of persons,
- Secure transport of goods and valuables

All other activities in this field are not regulated and can be carried out in these cantons directly on the basis of a foreign qualification.

In order to work in one of the three areas regulated by the intercantonal agreement, the first step is to contact the [cantonal police](#) in the canton where the professional activity will take place. The cantonal police will then provide information about the applicable regulations and the Swiss qualifications required in order to carry out the activity in question. If the holder of a foreign qualification needs to obtain recognition, an application for recognition may be submitted to SERI (www.sbf.admin.ch/becc). The recognition procedure takes place exclusively online.

b) German- and Italian-speaking cantons

In order to work in a security-related field, the first step is to contact the [cantonal police](#) in the canton where the professional activity will take place. The cantonal police will then provide information about the applicable regulations and the Swiss qualifications required in order to carry out the activity in question.

For example, the **Canton of Bern** requires security guards to hold a federal professional qualification. Holders of foreign professional qualifications must therefore apply to SERI for recognition of their qualifications. The recognition procedure takes place exclusively online.

Other German-speaking cantons may soon issue their own regulations, and the situation may change. Additional up-to-date information can be found under “*Entreprise de sécurité privées*” (in French) or “*Private Sicherheitsunternehmen*” (in German) on the website of Switzerland’s national intercantonal body, the Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors: www.kkjpd.ch

2. Specific details for EU/EFTA citizens who wish to provide services in Switzerland

Basic principle

In accordance with the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (AFMP), professionals who are legally established in the EU/EFTA may provide services in Switzerland without permanently establishing themselves in the country. In such cases, the duration of service provision is limited to 90 days per calendar year.

If the profession they wish to pursue is regulated, they can take advantage of a fast-track verification procedure for their professional qualifications, as set out in EU Directive 2005/36/EC¹ and the DRPA². **The service provision must be declared in advance to SERI³.**

Other requirements

In all cases, persons intending to provide services must also register with the State Secretariat for Migration (www.sem.admin.ch > Entry, residence & working > Notification procedure for short-term work in Switzerland). This requirement also applies to non-regulated professional activities.

Who is a service provider?

Service provision is an economic activity carried out on a self-employed basis or without conclusion of an employment contract with a Swiss employer. It is remunerated work of a temporary or occasional nature (limited to 90 working days per calendar year) carried out in Switzerland by an individual who is established in a member state of the EU or EFTA. If you require further information, SERI provides a more detailed note on the service provider concept on its website.

Persons who are not service providers within the meaning of the AFMP will not be able to take advantage of the fast-track procedure for the verification of qualifications. They should instead contact the competent authority to seek recognition of their qualifications under Title III of Directive 2005/36/EC.

¹ Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255 of 30.9.2005, p. 22, in the current version in accordance with the agreement on the free movement of persons and the revised EFTA Convention.

² Federal Act of 14 December 2012 on the Declaration Requirement and the Verification of Service Provider Qualifications in Regulated Professions, SR 935.01.

³ www.sbf.admin.ch/edeclaration