

How Can I Relocate to Switzerland and What Help is Available?

Switzerland continues to attract internationally mobile individuals and families due to its political stability, high quality of life, strong economy and attractive residence options. Careful planning is important to ensure you choose the most suitable residence route and understand the associated tax implications.

By **Christine Breitler**, 20th April 2026

Non-Swiss nationals are allowed to stay in Switzerland as tourists, without registration, for up to three months. After three months, anyone planning to stay in Switzerland must obtain a work and/or residence permit, and formally register with the Swiss authorities.

How can I Become a Legal Swiss Resident?

There are two alternative routes to become a Swiss resident:

- By working in Switzerland
- By not working in Switzerland and/or by being retired
 - The 'Normal System of Taxation'
 - The 'Lump Sum System of Taxation'

Working in Switzerland

The acquisition of a Swiss work permit allows a non-Swiss national to become a Swiss resident.

There are three ways to be entitled to work in Switzerland:

- Being hired by an existing Swiss company.
- Forming a Swiss company and become a director or an employee of the company.
- Investing in a Swiss company and become a director or an employee of the company.

When applying to work in Switzerland and/or for residence permits, different regulations apply to EU/EFTA nationals, compared to nationals of other countries.

- It is a straightforward process for EU/EFTA citizens as they enjoy priority access to the labour market in Switzerland.
- Non-EU/EFTA nationals can work in Switzerland as long as they are appropriately qualified, for example managers or specialists and/or with higher education qualifications.

An alternative route is for non-Swiss nationals to form a Swiss company and obtain a residence permit in Switzerland. Relevant individuals must be employed by the company that they establish in Switzerland.

Non-EU/EFTA businesses need to create jobs and business opportunities in Switzerland. The precise number and nature varies depending on the particular canton in which the business is located.

Normal System of Taxation – Not working in Switzerland

The process is relatively straightforward for EU/EFTA nationals wanting to live, but not work, in Switzerland and taxed via normal system of taxation.

Individuals must have sufficient financial resources to live in Switzerland and ensure that they will not become dependent on Swiss welfare and they also need to take have Swiss health and accident insurance

For Non-EU/EFTA nationals the process is less straightforward but is achievable, under the correct circumstances.

A non-Swiss national, who does not work in Switzerland, can apply for Swiss residency under the system of 'Lump Sum Taxation'.

- The taxpayer's lifestyle expenses are used as a tax base instead of his/her global income and wealth. There is no reporting of global earnings and assets.

Once the tax base has been determined and agreed with the tax authorities, it will be subject to the standard tax rate relevant in that particular canton.

Work activities outside Switzerland are permitted. Activities relating to the administration of private assets in Switzerland can also be undertaken.

Third country nationals (non-EU/EFTA), may be required to pay a higher lump-sum tax on the basis of "predominant cantonal interest". This will depend on a number of factors and varies case by case.

How can an Individual Become a Swiss Citizen?

- An EU or non-EU/EFTA national must have lived in Switzerland for at least 10 years, to be able to apply for a Swiss passport.
- If an EU or non-EU/EFTA national is the spouse of a Swiss national, they need only to have lived in Switzerland for 5 years.

What Advice and Support can Dixcart in Switzerland Provide?

Dixcart in Switzerland is experienced in assisting individuals to move to this country having assisted:

- Individuals working for Swiss companies
- Individuals seeking to establish a Swiss company
- Individuals based in or moving to Switzerland and working for foreign companies

- Foreign companies looking to set up a Swiss branch or companies
- Those seeking to take advantage of the Lump Sum System of Taxation

Professional support includes guidance regarding:

- Choice of location to move to in Switzerland: canton and city.
- Lump Sum Taxation: the criteria, how to apply for it, the taxation implications for the specific circumstances (dependent on the canton where the individual chooses to live).
- For employees, assistance regarding: salary calculations, social security calculations and payments, and payroll tax calculations and payments.
- For those seeking to set up a business: bookkeeping, business plans, payroll, preparation of annual accounts, preparation of annual returns, Swiss insurance expertise, Swiss social security expertise, and value added tax reporting and payment (VAT).

Additional Information

If you would like additional information regarding moving to Switzerland and the assistance that Dixcart Switzerland can provide, please contact [Christine Breitler](#) at the Dixcart office in Switzerland: advice.switzerland@dixcart.com.