

Continued employment and new placement of British foreign language assistants at host schools in Switzerland after Brexit

The end of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between Switzerland and the UK will have an effect on incoming mobility. British mobility to Switzerland now falls into the **third-country category**. This gives rise to various issues, presented below in accordance with our current state of knowledge.

1.1 Continued employment of British foreign language assistants from the school year 2021/22

The following applies for host schools that currently employ and are to retain (after consultation with Movetia) UK nationals: it is imperative that the schools ensure that the language assistants they employ also have a **valid residence and work permit** for the following year. Special attention has to be paid to the **authorisation status** (L or B, details on this in point 1.3).

People who, to date, have been insured through their **foreign health insurance fund** need to know that: the new Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) is not valid in Switzerland. It is therefore essential that those concerned take out health insurance in Switzerland. Health insurance is obligatory for anyone living in Switzerland. The insurance is personal and can be taken out with a health insurance company of your own choice (see point 1.3).

1.2 Hiring new British foreign language assistants from the school year 2021/22

For the employment of new candidates as of the school year 2021/22, the host schools must apply for residence and work permits. The whole process takes about three months. If you actively contact the offices involved, two months may be sufficient, depending on the canton. If you also have to demonstrate **unsuccessful search efforts** for other persons from EU/EFTA countries, the process takes correspondingly longer (see point 1.2.1).

There are **quotas** per canton for the granting of permits. These are granted per quarter. It is not the case that only applications submitted at the beginning of the year can be approved. However, there is no entitlement to the issuance of a residence/work permit. The following section details the individual stages.

1.2.1 Application by the host school to the cantonal authority

1. A **residence and work permit** is always required irrespective of the duration of the stay.
2. The host school must apply for a work permit from the responsible cantonal authorities. A list of these offices with the address of the competent authority in each canton is published on the [State Secretariat for Migration \(SEM\) website](#).

Various documents and certificates must be enclosed with the application. These may vary from canton to canton. Here, the example of the canton of Bern:

- CV
- Training certificate/diploma
- Employment contract
- Copy of passport or identity card
- Evidence of search efforts in Switzerland and in all EU/EFTA states over a period of several weeks.

The costs vary by canton: Bern 300 CHF, Zurich 400 CHF, Basel-Landschaft 120 CHF. Subject to change without notice.

3. If the canton approves the application, it automatically sends an application to the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM). This permit costs 180 CHF. If the SEM also approves the application, the cantonal migration office must validate this decision at cantonal level. Further costs of around 95 CHF are incurred on the part of the cantonal migration office, which – depending on the situation – also include an authorisation to issue a visa.

1.2.2 What needs to be clarified before entering Switzerland

Prospective foreign language assistants must clarify with the cantonal office and the Swiss Embassy in the UK whether they need to apply for a visa at the Swiss Embassy (see point 1.2.3).

1.2.3 Application by the language assistant to the Swiss representation in Great Britain

According to information from the Swiss Embassy (March 2021), UK nationals do not require a visa, either for stays of up to 90 days or for stays longer than 90 days. However, due to the ongoing **corona pandemic**, a **special travel certificate** (laisser-passer) is required.

The competent migration office of the respective canton must in any case be contacted in the case of stays of more than 90 days (see point 1.2.2).

If the person does need a visa, an application has to be made to the **Swiss consulate** in London, Edinburgh or Manchester. Not all consulates are entitled to issue a visa. This must be clarified in advance. If this is not possible at the consulate, you have to consult the **embassy in London**. The documents required for this are: cantonal authorisation for issuing a visa (see above), passport, passport photo and money for the fee. The visa costs around 60 CHF and is valid for three months.

The person must go to the embassy in person after first making an appointment. To be on the safe side, you should clarify whether further documents are required.

1.2.4 Registration of the language assistant in Switzerland

After arriving in Switzerland, the prospective language assistant must register with the municipality within 14 days. **Language assistants must choose a place of residence within the canton in which they work.** An **employment contract**, passport and confirmation of health insurance are required for **registration**.

The Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) is not valid in Switzerland. The language assistants must therefore take out health insurance before coming to Switzerland.

During registration with the municipality, the person receives a work and residence permit (L or B) and discovers whether digital fingerprints also need to be taken. Further costs of around 150 CHF are to be expected for the registration with the municipality and the issuing of a permit.

1.3 Placement of people already resident in Switzerland

Residence permits of British nationals already existing in 2020 or earlier (permit L or B) can be renewed according to the old rules on the free movement of persons as long as the permit requirements continue to be met, i.e. as long as the person fulfils the conditions for a residence category of the

Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (AFMP) or the Agreement on Acquired Rights (e.g. as a job seeker or as a non-employed person with sufficient financial means).¹

Useful links

www.comparis.ch/krankenkassen/default.aspx
www.vzonline.ch/de/vergleichen/krankenkassen.html
www.swupp.ch/Krankenkassenvergleich.php
www.priminfo.ch/praemien/index.php?sprache=d

1.4 Further information

The [provisions of the circular of the State Secretariat for Migration](#) (SEM) from 14 December 2020 as well as other information from the SEM and the FDFA also apply.

1.5 Useful links

[SEM circular dated 14 December 2020 \(German/French/Italian\)](#)

Movetia News

<https://www.movetia.ch/news-events/brexit-update-faq>

VKM members (German/French/Italian)

<https://vkm-asm.ch/mitglieder>

Cantonal authorities

https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/sem/kontakt/kantonale_behoerden/adressen_kantone_und.html

Swiss–UK relations post Brexit – FDFA website

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/dea/en/home/verhandlungen-offene-themen/offene-themen/brexit.html>

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¹ Info from the SEM