

FAQ - Administrative aspects of the work permits for Third-country nationals

February 2024

Q1. What are the steps to take to obtain a temporary residence permit for seeking employment in Switzerland?

The request must be made by the degree-holder to the *Controllo abitanti* of his/her place of residence. He/she must be able to show that he/she has **successfully passed the final exams** and that he/she has sufficient revenue (either at least CHF 2,100 per month, or a total of CHF 12,600) and somewhere to live. This jobseeker permit is valid for a maximum of **six months**. **Attention:** *You need to obtain this temporary residence permit in order to stay in Switzerland after your studies. It is not issued automatically or tacitly, and may be refused if some of the above conditions are not met, or if the applicant falls foul of Article 62 of the Law on Foreigners (i.e. if he/she has made false declarations, if he/she has been sentenced to a prison term, if he/she has threatened public security or order, if he/she is dependent on social assistance, etc.).*

Q2. When does the six-month period start? What happens when the six months are up?

The six-month period starts **from the moment the student has been notified of the success of his/her final exams** by the Registrar's Office, and not from the moment at which the degree is actually awarded.

Attention: *the six-month period runs from the date at which success was notified, even if the application for the permit is filed afterwards. In other words, if you file your application two months after being informed of your success, you will only get four months on your permit!*

This type of residence permit is not renewable. This means that you will need to leave the country when it expires, unless you have a legal right to stay in Switzerland.

Q3. My Student permit B is valid until after I obtain my degree. Can I stay on in Switzerland with this permit after my degree, and then request a temporary residence permit to seek employment?

No. If you complete your studies before your student permit expires, the outstanding period (up to 6 months) will in any case be included in the duration of the jobseeker permit, because, as explained in Q2, the 6-month period starts to run as soon as the successful completion of your studies is notified.

Q4. What are the obligations linked to this jobseeker permit?

You must hold sufficient financial resources and have somewhere to live. In addition, the permit holder cannot work more than 15 hours per week. Longer working hours are considered incompatible with your job search. On the other hand, there is no need for you to

show proof of your job search, and you can enter and leave Switzerland without losing the permit.

Q5. If I leave Switzerland after I graduate, can I come back later and take up my right to this permit?

Not if you leave for more than six months, since the six-month period starts from the notification of success in your final exams. If you have been away for a shorter time, you can take advantage of the outstanding time up to the deadline of six months – provided that you applied for it before leaving the country.

Q6. If I take advantage of this permit, do I have any rights to unemployment insurance (including allowances, courses, etc.) during my job search?

In principle no, as you are not considered to be legally “eligible to work” (Art. 15 al. 1 of the Law on Unemployment Insurance) as long as you do not have a work permit. Nevertheless, your Regional Unemployment Office (*ORP*) will decide on a case-by-case basis.

The resident permit based on employment (“work permit”) – Third countries

Q7. If I find a job, what should I do to obtain a permit?

Your future employer will take care of the application and will provide the required documents. Your role is limited to finding a job. As part of the application, an employment contract signed by both parties must be provided, which will only take effect if the permit is issued.

Q8. If I was denied a permit once, does that affect my chances of getting one for another job?

Theoretically not, since the permit is denied to the employer, not to you. The denial is often related to the position itself (not of significant scientific or economic interest, part-time work, salary too far below the usual conditions for that industry, etc.).

Legal texts

- [Federal Act on Foreign Nationals and Integration \(RS 142.20\)](#)
- [Ordinance on the admission, residence and exercise of a gainful activity \(RS 142.201\)](#)

Other useful information

State Secretariat for migration:

- EU and EFTA nationals: [FAQ](#)
- Third-country nationals: [information and procedures](#)