



Horizon 2

Information Bulletin for Migrants in Geneva

Permits: what you need to know

Obtaining a residency or work permit in Switzerland depends on several factors, the rules are complex, and each situation is different. This is why it is always safer to seek guidance with one of the specialized services before starting one of these processes. However, you may want to keep the following points in mind:

- Switzerland applies *ius sanguinis* or right of blood (nationality is transmitted from parent to child, rather than by place of birth). Therefore, **being born in Switzerland does not give a child the right to Swiss nationality, or even to a residency permit.**
- If you have a residency permit in a country of the European Union, but that you are a citizen of a non-EU country, **you do not have a right to reside and work in Switzerland.**
- However, if you or a person in your family (including your child) is a **citizen of an EU-member country**, you have rights in Switzerland.
- It can be dangerous to fill in, alone or with your employer, a form requesting a permit if you come from a non-EU country. The chances of success are close to zero and the consequences can be very serious (refusal and possible deportation).

- If you come from a non-EU country, you must be aware that the conditions to obtain a permit are very strict. It is necessary to consult a specialized service before starting the process. **Do not assume that your case will succeed because someone in a situation similar to yours has obtained a permit.**
- Obtaining a permit for your spouse or your children in the framework of **family reunification** is submitted to various conditions, depending on your individual situation (employment, financial resources, housing, etc.).
- If you are an **EU citizen** (except Romania and Bulgaria), you can automatically obtain a residency and work permit if your employer requests it.

New opening hours

As of January 2012, the opening hours of CCSI (telephone and reception) are as follows:

- Monday: 1.30-4.30 pm
- Tuesday, Wednesday: 8.30-11.30 am and 1.30-4.30 pm
- Thursday, Friday: 8.30-11.30 am.

If you have an appointment with one of the consultations outside of these hours, please wait in the hall by the elevators. Someone will come to fetch you.

Important!

Please note that CCSI is not able to assist you in finding work or housing in Geneva.

To do so, you must have a work contract or a work proposal, certified by the EU form, for at least 12 hours per week. If you are hired for a year or more (long-term contract), you should receive a CE/AELE permit valid 5 years.

- If you are the parent of a **child with Swiss nationality**, you should in principle be able to obtain a residency permit.
- If you do not have a legal status, but that **your child is a Swiss citizen**, he/she has a right to obtain Swiss identity papers (ID card and passport). However, in practice, it is generally necessary that the parent assuming legal custody start the procedure to obtain a permit.

For all of these cases, it is necessary to **seek counsel with one of the specialized services** (CCSI, Caritas, SIT, CSP) before starting the procedures.

Health problems

Any person, regardless of status and even if he/she does not have health insurance, can receive medical help in Geneva. The CAMSCO was created to that end several years ago. You can seek medical attention with or without an appointment: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 9 - 11 am; Wednesday and Thursday 1.30 - 4 pm. You will find CAMSCO at 4, rue Hugo-de-Senger, 1205 Geneva (tel. 022 382 53 11).

Primary school: registration

If your child was born before 01.08.2007, he/she must attend school as of 2012. School starts on 27 August 2012. You can register your child at CCSI all year long. If your child arrives during the school year, he/she can start school at any time. Please make an appointment with the Permanence Ecole for the necessary administrative steps.

School-related activities: caution!

If your child is registered but cannot attend school meals or after-school activities, you must **warn the persons in charge**: if your child does not show up, has not been excused and if they cannot reach you, your child's absence must be notified to the police.

Help in finding daycare

Are you the parent of a pre-school child? Are you looking for a daycare solution? Although the situation in Geneva is very difficult – the waiting-list is long, and one cannot always find a place – CCSI might be able to increase your chances.

If you live in Geneva city, go to the Bureau d'Information de la Petite Enfance (BIPE) at 8 rue du Cendrier, 1201 Geneva. If you live in another area in Geneva canton, you must go to the Secteur de la Petite Enfance in your commune – if there is one. If not, pre-register your child in the daycare center(s) closest to your home or workplace. To do so, you must

present your child's insurance certificate.

After that, CCSI can write a letter of recommendation to support your request. For this, you will need to **make an appointment, preferably in February or March**, with the Permanence Petite enfance, santé et genre at CCSI, so that your child can start daycare as of August. Please note that there are no guarantees that your child will have a place in daycare.

The cost of monthly payments depends on your income. For full-time daycare, for the lowest income, the cost is approx. CHF 250 per month. For the time being, there are no financial aids for those costs.

Health insurance 2012

Do you have children in daycare or school? Depending on your income, you are entitled to a subsidy (financial aid for health insurance). For children, the subsidy covers most of the monthly premium. **The subsidy must be renewed each year**, preferably at the beginning of the year, so as to avoid reminders and legal action. For adults who have health insurance and who are declared (i.e. who have an AVS card), it is also possible to ask for a subsidy for the “family group”. The subsidies for adults only cover a very small part of the monthly premium.

To assist you with these procedures, CCSI needs the copies of your **insurance policy** and, if you have them, **annual salary certificates** for the preceding year,

or your three last **salary slips**.

Moreover, all those who have health insurance have a right to a **pharmacy card** (that allows you to get medicine without paying at the pharmacy). If you have health insurance but have not received your pharmacy card, please also contact us at CCSI.

Finally do not sign any health insurance related documents with an insurance broker who has come to your home! The pressure might be strong, but it is dangerous to sign such documents. **Contact us** before making any changes regarding your (or your children's) health insurance.

Your contribution

As of 1 January 2012, we kindly ask you for an annual financial contribution. The contribution comes to 50 francs per case and per year (the amount can be negotiated if you have financial difficulties), and can be paid cash at the reception or by payment slip at the post-office.

This decision was taken by the CCSI committee. In order to continue to assist you as adequately as possible and to reduce the delay in obtaining an appointment, we need more resources. Over the last few years, the CCSI has made considerable efforts to increase its income. Today we are asking you to contribute to these efforts. If you have any questions about this decision, please feel free to ask !

