


# Founding a company or organization for non-Swiss nationals

Even without a Swiss passport, you can set up a company or other organisation in Switzerland. However, you must meet a certain number of requirements to do so. Here you will find a brief overview:

## REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for setting up a company for persons without a Swiss passport:

Legal form	EU / EFTA citizen	Citizens of third states
<b>Sole proprietorship &amp; General partnership</b>  <b>(Einzelunternehmen &amp; Kollektivgesellschaft)</b>	<p>No residence in Switzerland required (Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons). However, you need a residence permit and your company needs an address in Switzerland.</p> <p>Croatian citizens must clarify the requirements with the cantonal migration office.</p>	<p>A company foundation is only possible for persons who meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have a C residence permit.</li> <li>• You are in possession of a B residence permit for family reunification (only possible if spouse or parent has a C residence permit or a Swiss passport).</li> <li>• Application to cantonal labour market authorities with credible proof that the company has a lasting positive impact on the Swiss labour market.</li> </ul>
<b>Limited liability company</b>  <b>(GmbH)</b>	<p>An authorised representative must be resident in Switzerland.. This means that at least one person of the management with individual signatory power or two persons of the management with collective signatory power to two, must be resident in Switzerland. All other members of the management and associates may come from abroad and live there. Regardless of whether they are EU / EFTA citizens or from a third state.</p>	
<b>Public limited company</b>  <b>(AG)</b>	<p>An authorised representative must be resident in Switzerland. This means that at least one person on the Board of Directors with individual signatory powers, or two persons on the Board of Directors with collective signatory powers to two, must be resident in Switzerland.</p> <p>All other members of the Board of Directors, all shareholders and also the founders may come from abroad and live there. Regardless of whether they are EU / EFTA citizens or from a third state.</p>	
<b>Association</b>	<p>Foundation in principle possible.</p>	
<b>Foundation &amp; Cooperative</b>	<p>An authorised representative must be resident in Switzerland. This means that at least one person on the foundation board / administration with individual signatory powers, or two persons in the administration with collective signatory powers to two, must be resident in Switzerland.</p> <p>All other members in the administration and all members of the foundation / cooperative can come from abroad and live there. Regardless of whether they are EU / EFTA citizens or from a third country.</p>	

**Further information for persons from EU / EFTA states:** [www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/foreign-national/nationals-eu-efta.html](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/foreign-national/nationals-eu-efta.html) 


**Further information for persons from third states:** [www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/foreign-national/citizen-of-third-state.html](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/foreign-national/citizen-of-third-state.html) 


## RESIDENCE PERMIT

In order to be allowed to work in Switzerland or run your own business, you need a B, C, Ci, G residence permit or a Swiss passport. The migration and economy authorities of your canton are responsible for issuing residence and working permits.


Please contact them:


### Canton of Bern

Office for Population Services of the Canton of Bern  
(Amt für Bevölkerungsdienste des Kantons Bern)  
Ostermundigenstrasse 99B  
3006 Bern  
Tel.: +41 31 633 53 15  
[www.pom.be.ch/pom/de/index/migration.html](http://www.pom.be.ch/pom/de/index/migration.html)  d | f


Department of Trade and Industry  
(Amt für Wirtschaft)  
Laupenstrasse 22  
3011 Bern  
Tel.: +41 31 633 58 10  
[www.vol.be.ch/vol/de/index/arbeit/auslaendische\\_erwerbstaetige.html](http://www.vol.be.ch/vol/de/index/arbeit/auslaendische_erwerbstaetige.html)  d | f

### Canton of Zurich

Migration Office  
(Migrationsamt des Kantons Zürich)  
Berninastrasse 45  
Postfach  
8090 Zürich  
Tel.: +41 43 259 88 00  
[ma.zh.ch/internet/sicherheitsdirektion/migrationsamt/de/service/international.html](http://ma.zh.ch/internet/sicherheitsdirektion/migrationsamt/de/service/international.html)  d | f | e

Office for Economy and Labour  
(Amt für Wirtschaft und Arbeit)  
Walchestrasse 19  
Postfach  
8090 Zürich  
Tel.: +41 43 259 26 26  
[awa.zh.ch/internet/volkswirtschaftsdirektion/awa/en/home.html](http://awa.zh.ch/internet/volkswirtschaftsdirektion/awa/en/home.html)  d | e

Your canton is not listed? You can find more here:

[www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/ueberuns/kontakt/kantonale\\_behoerden/adressen\\_kantone\\_und.html](http://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/ueberuns/kontakt/kantonale_behoerden/adressen_kantone_und.html) 


## INFORMATION ON LEGAL FORMS

The four most common legal forms for companies in Switzerland are the sole proprietorship, the general partnership, the limited liability company (GmbH) and the public limited company (AG). What you need to know about these legal forms can be found in your language under the following links:

### General information



[www.startbox.swiss](http://www.startbox.swiss)  d | f  
[www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme.html](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme.html) 

### Comparison of legal forms



[Comparison of legal forms](#) 

Other legal forms for non-profit organisations are associations, foundations and cooperatives. Information on this in several languages can be found under the following links:

### Associations

[www.vitaminb.ch](http://www.vitaminb.ch)  d | f | e  
[www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/choosing-legal-structure/associations.html](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/choosing-legal-structure/associations.html) 

### Foundations

[www.swissfoundations.ch](http://www.swissfoundations.ch)  d | f  
[www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/choosing-legal-structure/foundations.html](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/choosing-legal-structure/foundations.html) 

### Cooperatives

[www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/choosing-legal-structure/cooperative-company.htm](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/kmu/en/home/concrete-know-how/setting-up-sme/starting-business/choosing-legal-structure/cooperative-company.htm) 