

SWISS CITIZENSHIP / NATURALIZATION

It is in Switzerland's interest that well-integrated foreigners take up Swiss nationality. In the first place, the communes and cantons are responsible for naturalization matters. The Federal Government lays down the relevant criteria.

Immigration to Switzerland – Permit B (Temporary Residence)

Logically enough, Switzerland is one of the most attractive countries in the world for immigration and doing business. Relatively low tax rates (in comparison with most EU-countries) make Switzerland one of the best choices for business and private residence. Investors and entrepreneurs as well as persons of independent means would normally have no problem obtaining a residence permit.

At the same time foreign investor from Non-EU countries should keep in mind that EU-citizens enjoy preferential treatment in terms of obtaining residence permits in Switzerland. In particular, it is practically impossible for owners of small and medium-sized companies (if they are not holders of EU passports) to obtain residency in Switzerland with the right to work. Labor market of Switzerland is protected, and jobs are meant for Swiss citizens, then for EU-citizens, and only if are a really big expert in some area and can fulfill unique job duties, only then you can count on getting Permit B with a right to be gainfully occupied in Switzerland.

Lump-Sum Taxations Agreements – Permit B (Temporary Residence)

At the same time citizens of Non-EU countries can immigrate to Switzerland through the system of Lump-Sum Taxation Agreements. These agreements are possible in each canton with the exception of Zurich. It is normally arranged in the following way. Foreign investor or wealthy individual who wants to relocate to this or that canton concludes a special agreement with canton (with obligation to pay annually fixed tax from CHF 150,000 to CHF 1,000,000 depending upon the canton chosen). Authorities of the canton approve Permit B for the applicant and his family members (it will be temporary residence Switzerland without right to be gainfully occupied in Switzerland). After ten years of residence Permit B can be transformed into Permit C (permanent residence Switzerland).

ABOUT SWITZERLAND

The country between the Alps and Jura - Switzerland - is the link between northern and southern Europe. Here several European languages and cultures peacefully coexist.

Such diversity in such a small area, perhaps, not found anywhere else. Switzerland's economic success is directly linked to the liberal economic system, political stability and closer economic cooperation with other countries.

High level of education and infrastructure development contribute to the competitiveness of the Swiss economy.

The Swiss economy is based on highly skilled labor and well-trained workforce. The main areas include micro-technology, hi-tech, biotechnology, the pharmaceutical industry and the know-how in banking and insurance.

Major players in the financial center Switzerland are the banks. Asset management is one of its core businesses, in this field, the Swiss banks are world leaders: In a ranking of the world's largest asset managers as well as three Swiss banks that rank among the top ten. In second place on the list of financial center players follow the insurers.

In international comparison, Switzerland's financial center has established a significant position in the field of currency trading, commodity trading and management of funds of hedge funds. However, in the fund business in the institutional asset management, investment banking, commercial and corporate banking it has only a minor role.

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Contracts

We draft and negotiate the entire range of commercial agreements for domestic and foreign clients. While in one case it may be a simple mandate or agency agreement, in the other case it may be an elaborated joint venture agreement in a cross-border context or a complex licence agreement.

Corporate Law

We structure and incorporate new business enterprises for domestic and foreign clients. Our clients also retain us for the restructuring of their existing business enterprises. Our core experiences include complex domestic and international transactions, such as cross-border migrations and mergers.

We act as external directors and provide continuous support in corporate housekeeping matters to our clients.

Immigration Law

When our foreign clients set up new businesses in Switzerland, we help them to obtain the work and residence permits for their employees and their families. Our services include the drafting and filing of work permit applications and the negotiations with the authorities.

Labour Law

We draft individual employment contracts, company-wide employment regulations, bonus system and share participation plans. Due to the growing competition of the global economy non-compete and confidentiality agreements have also become of importance to our clients.

In the international context, our work includes the structuring of secondments to and from Switzerland and the drafting of the relevant agreements.

Litigation and Arbitration

In commercial law litigations we represent Swiss and foreign clients before Swiss courts.

Mergers & Acquisitions

We support our clients in the entire range of merger and acquisition activities, including share and asset deals, management buyouts and buyins, mergers, private equity transactions and joint ventures. Our services include the entire range of legal services required throughout a transaction: letter of intent, data room preparations, legal due diligence, drafting of the acquisition documents, negotiations, filing of merger notifications to the Swiss Competition Commission and coordination of filings with authorities outside of Switzerland, preparation and execution of the closing and post-closing implementation steps.

Our wide experience includes small local as well as large international transactions and ranges from the sale and purchase of domestic SMEs to listed international companies. Our clients retain us for the acquisition of domestic companies in Switzerland as well as for their expansions across the Swiss border.

Restructurings, Bankruptcies and Liquidations

We assist companies in their financial restructurings and their private and public debt moratorium procedures. We draft the relevant documents and file them with the competent authorities.

We assist creditors to protect their interests in restructurings, bankruptcies and liquidations and represent them in creditors' committees.

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