

## FAQ

### "Recognition of Foreign Qualifications in Switzerland"

#### 1. I have a foreign qualification. Do I need to have it recognized to work in Switzerland?

It depends.

If your profession is **regulated**, you may only practice it once your qualifications have been officially recognized (see question 2).

Exception: If you are an EU/EFTA national working in Switzerland for up to 90 days per calendar year, no recognition process is required (see questions 3 and 9).

If your profession is **not regulated**, no recognition is necessary, and you may work freely in your field.

#### 2. What is a regulated profession?

A regulated profession is one that requires specific qualifications by law or regulation.

Only those with officially recognized credentials may legally practice these professions.

Regulations may vary by canton, so it's important to check the requirements for your specific profession and region: [here](#)

#### 3. What is an unregulated profession?

An unregulated profession does not require specific legal qualifications. Foreign diplomas do not need to be recognized to work in these fields.

However, you may request a comparison with a Swiss qualification to help with:

Employment opportunities

Unemployment insurance eligibility

Access to further education or training

This process may lead to either recognition or, more commonly, a level confirmation (see question 4).

#### 4. What is the difference between recognition and level confirmation?

In comparison to the Swiss qualification, four criteria must be met for a qualification to be recognized, whereas only two are required for a level confirmation to be issued:

RECOGNITION	✓	The same educational level is given.	✓	LEVEL CONFIRMATION
	✓	The duration of education is the same.	✓	
	✓	The educational content is comparable.	--	
	✓	The foreign educational program includes both theoretical and practical qualifications or relevant professional experience is available.	--	

If all four criteria are not met, compensatory measures may be needed (see below / Q8). to obtain recognition for a regulated profession.

## **5. Who is responsible for the recognition of foreign Diplomas or level confirmations?**

The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SBFI) is the contact point for all questions relating to foreign diplomas. It can be contacted by e-mail at [kontaktstelle@sbfi.admin.ch](mailto:kontaktstelle@sbfi.admin.ch) or by telephone on +41 58 462 28 26 from Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 11.30. [Website](#) and [FAQ](#)

**SBFI is not responsible for all applications. For many regulated professions, recognition is handled by the relevant professional authority. You can find the responsible institution for your profession here: [\[Insert link\]](#).**

## **6. What are the requirements for recognition or level confirmation?**

To apply, the following must be met:

- 1) Your qualification must be issued or recognized by the state in your country of origin.
- 2) You must have the language skills required to practice your profession. These usually range from B2 to C2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

You may provide proof of language proficiency during the recognition procedure. For exact requirements, contact the recognition authority (see question 5)

## **7. What are “adjustment measures”?**

If your foreign qualification qualifies you to practice a regulated profession in your home country but does not fully meet the four Swiss criteria, you may be required to complete adjustment measures, to compensate for the differences, such as:

An aptitude test to demonstrate missing skills

A supervised adaptation period (e.g., internship or employment with mentoring)

However, the [Ordinance on Vocational Education and Training](#) also states compensatory measures are not required if they would equal a large part of the Swiss training program. In that case, recognition may be denied.

## **8. Will I be entitled to a better salary category after recognition or level confirmation? Not automatically.**

Recognition or level confirmation does not guarantee a specific salary category. However, it can serve as a valuable argument in salary negotiations.

If your profession falls under a Collective Employment Agreement (CEA) that ties qualification recognition to salary levels, then such placement may be legally binding. Be sure to consult the relevant CEA.

## **9. What do EU/EFTA citizens need to do for short-term work (up to 90 days) in a regulated profession)?**

You must register with the SBFI before starting work if your profession is subject to registration: [Registration procedure for short-term gainful employment \(admin.ch\)](#)

Your professional qualifications will be verified, but under simplified conditions. You must also register your service with the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM). Further Information: [Service providers \(admin.ch\)](#)

## 10. How does Unia support members with diploma recognition or level confirmation?

Unia members can apply for financial support through the Unia Foundation.

The Foundation covers up to 50% of the costs, up to a maximum of CHF 750.00. Eligible expenses include:

Procedure fees; Certified translations of required documents; Costs related to compensatory measures.

Conditions follow the same rules as education and training subsidies. See: "Information Sheet on Education and Training for Members."

## Self-check: Is diploma recognition or level confirmation right for me?

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Have you completed your training? Is your qualification state-issued or recognized in your country?	→ If No to either, recognition is not possible.
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Do you need recognition for a regulated profession? (Ask the recognition authority)	→ If yes, check if your language skills meet the required level. If not, this must be proven or acquired.
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Special scheme: Are you an EU/EFTA national working short-term (max. 90 days/year) in a regulated profession?	→ If 'Yes', no formal recognition procedure is required, but for <a href="#">certain professions</a> you must register the provision of services with the SBFI (information <a href="#">here</a> ). Registration with the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) is always mandatory before providing services (information <a href="#">here</a> ).
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Note: Neither recognition nor level confirmation automatically entitles the holder to be placed in a particular salary bracket!

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## Recognition Procedure – Step-by-Step

**Do you have a state-recognised foreign diploma, and you think having it recognized? This is the Procedere:**

1. Find your profession [here](#) (first step in navigation) and select the country where you studied (second step).
2. Depending on the profession, you must also indicate the canton where you intend to practice.

- Check if your profession is regulated. If yes:  
Contact the responsible authority; ask which language skills are required; begin the process once you meet the language criteria

If your profession is **not regulated**, you may still apply for voluntary recognition or a level confirmation, especially if:

You are covered by a Collective Labour Agreement (CLA). The CLA contains recognition or salary-related provisions.

Check: [www.gav-service.ch](http://www.gav-service.ch).

Unia members can contact their regional secretariat for support.

**If the CLA includes recognition provisions:** contact the relevant body indicated in the CLA. Unia members can also consult their regional secretariat

- In a few cases, the CLA will automatically determine the salary grade; in other cases, the Joint Committee may decide on the salary grade based on your diploma. You do not need to initiate a recognition procedure, but you must contact the Joint Committee.
  - In other cases, recognition or confirmation of level may be worthwhile: for example, if the CLA stipulates that the employer must treat your recognized training as Swiss training (i.e. place you in the same salary category). In this case, follow the procedure described in point 3 above.
- 4.1. **If there are no provisions for recognition in the CLA**, you can still initiate the process for recognition or level confirmation with the competent authority. However, the process does not automatically guarantee your automatic salary rights but can support salary negotiations.
- Consider whether a process of recognition would be worthwhile in this case.

In all cases, once your process is complete, Unia members can request funding support.