

Immigration - Switzerland

Federal Office for Migration becomes State Secretariat for Migration

Contributed by **Suter Howald Attorneys at Law**

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As from January 1 2015 the Federal Office for Migration will be known as the State Secretariat for Migration. The name has been changed due to the authority's growing importance and wide-ranging responsibilities. It is also a consequence of a vote on February 9 2014 which aimed to stop mass immigration and has changed the Swiss Constitution. As such, Switzerland appointed the head of the State Secretariat for Migration to state secretary. As such, the State Secretariat for Migration can represent Switzerland in front of the European Union in order to find a solution to its constitutional change (which is not compliant with the bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the European Union). The organisation and structure of the former office remain unchanged.

The State Secretariat for Migration is the federal authority which regulates the conditions under which people can enter Switzerland in order to live and work. It also decides who will receive protection from persecution (asylum). Further, it coordinates federal, cantonal and communal efforts on behalf of integration and is responsible for naturalisation matters.

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