



Marriage to be performed in Switzerland for persons resident in The Gambia

21.06.2022

Documents to submit in person to your Swiss representation

The partner resident in Switzerland must initiate the procedure at the civil status office, where the marriage will take place. All relevant information must therefore be obtained there.

The partner resident in The Gambia is required to appear in person at the embassy. If both partners are resident in The Gambia, they must appear together at the embassy. On this occasion, the forms «Application for preparatory procedure for marriage» and «Declaration concerning pre-conditions for entering into marriage» must be completed and signed in the presence of an Embassy staff member.

In addition, the following documents must be submitted:

For the partner living in Switzerland

- Copy of actual certificate of residence
- Copy of valid Swiss passport or copy of foreign passport and copy of Swiss residence permit

For the partner living in The Gambia:

- extract of birth certificate, issued by the Registrar of Births of the place of birth; this is the original copy (extract) of the first birth registration, carried out by one of the parents (mother, father)
- original current civil status record:
 - a) Affidavit (declaration under oath concerning the civil status), legalized by a notary public
 - b) divorce order and divorce certificate, both issued by the competent court
 - c) Death certificate of the former spouse and marriage certificate of the former marriage
- certificate of domicile/residence, issued by a Notary Public or the "Area Council"
- valid passport or identity card + 1 copy

If the person is already registered in the Swiss civil registry, not all of the above documents may be required.

The documents have to be originals and must not be older than six months. They are submitted to the competent civil status authority in Switzerland and will not be returned. Photocopies are not accepted. Additional documents may be required if necessary.

Visa for marriage and evtl. taking up residence in Switzerland (family reunion)

The personal appearance of the partner living in the Gambia is mandatory. In addition to the documents mentioned above, the following documents must be submitted:

- valid passport + **3 copies**
- 3 national type D visa application forms, fully completed, dated and signed; application form: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html>
- 4 recent identity pictures of good quality and light background

Thorough verification

Foreign civil status documents are subjected to a thorough authenticity verification by an approved law firm mandated by the representation. For this purpose, the Swiss representation requires the following:

- declaration form "Voluntary verification of foreign civil status documents", duly dated and signed (download on our website)
- advance payment of 400'000 francs CFA for a thorough verification by a law firm approved by the Swiss representation
- questionnaire for the verification of civil status documents (download on our website)

Additional documents may be required, depending on the conclusions of a lawyer's expert advice or the requirements of the authorities in Switzerland.

The approved law firm mandated may take up to six months, sometimes longer, to verify the civil status documents thoroughly. The conclusions of the firm's advice are not binding on the civil status authority concerned.

Fees

Fees are charged in accordance with the Ordinance on Fees of Swiss Diplomatic and Consular Missions of 29.11.2006 and the Ordinance on the Fees of Civil Status Affairs of 27.10.1999. They are payable in cash in CFA francs according to the current exchange rate at the time of submission of the file.

- In addition to the above-mentioned costs of the thorough verification, there are the fees for marriage preparation for a marriage concluded in Switzerland: please prepare an advance of costs totalling CFA 500,000. A final statement will be issued at the end of the procedure.
- Visa fees for family reunion:
0-5 years free of charge / 6-11 years EUR 40.00 / ≥12 years EUR 80.00.

Under certain conditions, visa fees for family members of nationals of Schengen Member States are free of charge.

Submission of the file and procedure

It is possible to have documents procured by relatives or authorized third parties.

Upon completion of the verification, the embassy legalizes the documents and forwards them to the competent cantonal authorities. The entry in the Swiss civil status register can take up to two months.

The application for a visa for family reunion will be forwarded to the competent cantonal migration office. The decision of the visa request may take several months.

The submission of files at the Embassy is only possible after prior appointment by telephone or by e-mail. Incomplete dossiers will not be accepted. To complete a file, a new appointment is mandatory.

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