



Birth of a child in The Gambia to parents who are not married: Entry in the Swiss civil status register

21.06.2022

Documents to submit

For the child

- 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)

For the parent living in Switzerland

- copy of Swiss passport or copy of foreign passport with copy of Swiss residence permit
- copy of certificate of residence

For the foreign parent who is not yet registered in the Swiss civil status register

- 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)
- proof of civil status at the time of birth of the child
 - 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"
- copy of valid passport or identity card
- in case the parents got married: marriage certificate, issued by the civil status office of the place of marriage

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 taking up residence in Switzerland (family reunion)

The personal appearance of the child accompanied by the legal guardian is mandatory. In addition to the documents mentioned above, the following documents must be submitted:

- valid passport of the child + **3 copies**
- 3 national type D visa application forms, fully completed, dated and signed by the person with parental custody. Application form: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html>
- 4 recent identity pictures of good quality and light background
- for children of school age: school certificate + **1 copy**
- Authorization from the parent staying in The Gambia and copy of national passport or identity card; both documents need to be legalized by the police + **1 copy**
- authorization from the parent living in Switzerland (and if applicable their spouse), requesting the family reunion + **1 copy**

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.

- An advance of 400'000 francs CFA is payable for the costs of the thorough verification of foreign civil status documents. A final account is drawn up 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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