

INFORMATION LETTER 06/2019

A1 certificate for cross-border work

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are sending this letter to inform you about the need for cross-border workers to be able to demonstrate that they contribute to the Swiss social security system by presenting an A1 certificate.

Cross-border working by employees and self-employed people is becoming increasingly common as part of the growing trend for globalisation. The Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (AFM) between Switzerland and the EU member states, which came into force on 1 June 2002, guarantees free movement within the signatory countries for Swiss and EU citizens. The same rules apply to citizens of EFTA countries.

The right of freedom of movement is complemented by the coordination of the social security systems. This determines which country's social security system a cross-border worker carrying out multiple activities contributes to and excludes the possibility of contributing in more than one country. As a result, it is essential for cross-border workers to be able to prove which country's social security system they contribute to. The A1 certificate provides this proof.

Since 1 January 2019 the checks in this area have become more stringent. In Austria and in France in particular, far more checks are being carried out on cross-border workers.

This applies not only to manual work but also to the following types of activities within the EU/EFTA:

- Taking part in meetings and conferences
- Board meetings
- Attending trade fairs
- Taking part in training courses
- Providing consultancy (even if only for a few hours)

The obligation for a worker to provide proof that they contribute to a social security system applies from the first minute of carrying out cross-border work. There is no margin of tolerance.

If a worker cannot provide an A1 certificate, they will be subject to serious penalties. These can take the form of substantial fines or of estimated invoices for the social security contributions due in the country where they are working. The type of penalty varies from country to country.

Workers must apply in advance for an A1 certificate every time that they work in another country. If a worker is working several times each year in different countries, they can apply for an A1 certificate for multiple activities for a maximum period of two years.

The employer's compensation fund is responsible for issuing the A1 certificate. The worker must apply for the certificate via the ALPS online platform. ALPS (Applicable Legislation Platform Switzerland) is a web application that allows companies, self-employed people, compensation funds and the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO) to manage work assignments abroad. In Switzerland, information is shared by the company, the compensation fund and the FSIO only via ALPS. Paper documents are no longer used. The ALPS online platform ensures that important data can be shared across borders.

We will be happy to provide you with advice in this area and to help you to obtain an A1 certificate.

If you have any questions, please contact your administrator directly.

Yours sincerely

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