

SWITZERLAND – Quotas for Work Permits in 2015 Announced

By Peregrine Immigration Management Ltd
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The Swiss government has announced the quotas for highly qualified workers from non-European Union/European Free Trade Agreement countries, as well as for assignees from EU/EFTA countries. The Swiss Federal Council has adopted a partial amendment of the Ordinance on Admission, Stay and Employment (OASA), which will come into effect on 1 January 2015. As a result, the quotas announced are lower than those for 2014 (although note that quotas for 2014 have not yet been met).

Which Work Permits are Affected?

The quotas are imposed on a national, rather than per-company, basis, on B permits, which are long term residence permits, valid for up to five years, and renewable.

Once the B permit quotas are reached, applicants are issued with L permits instead – valid for up to 12 months and convertible into a B permit after two years.

2015 Quotas for Non-EU/EFTA Nationals

In 2015 companies in Switzerland can recruit foreign national specialists from non-EU/EFTA countries or Croatia (which is considered as non-EU for the purposes of immigration into Switzerland) up to the following national quotas:

- 4000 L permits (down from 5000);
- 2500 B permits (down from 3500).

This means that the government has decided to reduce the amount of work permits by 1000 for each of the above categories compared to last year.

As in previous years, half of the quota will be allocated to the cantons, with the other half kept as a Federal Reserve.

2015 Quotas for EU/EFTA National Assignees

The quotas for assignees from EU/EFTA countries to Switzerland for more than 90 days and for more than 120 days have also been reduced compared to last year:

- 2000 L permits (down from 3000);
- 250 B permits (down from 350).

These quotas will be allocated to the cantons on a quarterly basis, as before.

Action Items

Note that quotas for 2015 are reduced. Although 2014 quotas have not been met, it is possible that 2015 quotas will be; plan to submit work permit applications in good time to avoid issues.

This alert was prepared using information provided by Sgier und Partner

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