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PREPARING YOUR ARRIVAL IN NEUCHÂTEL

Have you been hired at UniNE or are you planning to work there? Here are some essential points to consider as you prepare for your arrival…



What should you do before your arrival in Neuchâtel?

1. For **non-EU/EFTA nationals** (also referred to as third-country nationals)[1], at least 3 months before entering Switzerland:

   ➔ Apply for a visa/residence permit at the Swiss embassy or consulate in your country of origin and wait for the decision of the authorities abroad.

   The University will apply for your work permit.

   - More information:
     - State Secretariat for Migration: https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise.html
     - Ch.ch: https://www.ch.ch/en/foreign-nationals-in-switzerland/entry-and-stay-in-switzerland/visas-for-foreign-nationals

2. If you will be **staying more than 3 months**, at any time before your departure:

   ➔ Collect important original documents translated into French, English, German, or Italian, e.g.:
   - *Birth certificate;*
   - *Marriage certificate (if you are married, or another relevant civil status document);*
   - *Family record book (if you are married and have children); …*

[1] For EU/EFTA nationals: the formalities are completed after your arrival (see the next section, p. 2).

3. As soon as you know your arrival date:

➔ Find accommodation for your stay or arrange temporary accommodation.

- More information: https://www.travailler-en-suisse.ch/trouver-logement-suisse.html
- Find accommodation, e.g.: https://en.comparis.ch/immobilien/default
- Find temporary accommodation:
  - Hotels in Neuchâtel: https://www.booking.com/searchresults.html?si=ai%2Cco%2Cci%2Cre%2Cla%2Cdi&ss=neuchatel%29&ifl=1&label=short-neuchatel&lang=en-us&soz=1&lang_changed=1
  - B&Bs: https://bnb.ch/en/
  - Shared accommodation: http://www.recherche-colocation.com/neuchatel.html

4. If you have **children**, before leaving:

➔ Identify childcare solutions and/or school arrangements.

ⓘ *In Switzerland, children start compulsory school at the age of 4. For younger children, there are nurseries, daycare centers, workshops, and other childcare facilities.*

- Childcare facilities in the canton of Neuchâtel: https://www.ne.ch/autorites/DFDS/SPAJ/accueil-extrafamilial/Pages/accueil.aspx
  - Vanille-Fraise nursery (children aged 0-4, priority given to UniNE members): https://www.unine.ch/creche/presentation/
- Everything you need to know about "family day care": https://www.mamansdejour.ch/
- Everything you need to know about au pair placements: https://www.profilia.ch/f/
- Platform for finding a nursery: https://creche-et-trouve.ch/

What should you do just after your arrival in Neuchâtel?

1. If you are an **EU/EFTA national** and will be **staying more than 3 months**, within the first 2 weeks (14 days[2]):

➔ Register with the residents' registration office ("contrôle des habitant-e-s") in your municipality of residence.

You will apply for a residence permit at this time. You will then need to provide a copy of the permit to the University's Human Resources Department.

You need to present the following documents[3]:

- Passport or identity card (valid original document)
- Up-to-date civil status documents (birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce certificate, family record book)
- Employment contract
- Rental lease, property deed, sublease agreement or housing authorization (download here) if you are not the leaseholder.

[2] Please note: this 14-day period applies to municipalities in the canton of Neuchâtel and most other Swiss municipalities. However, it may vary depending on the canton or municipality; for example in the canton of Vaud, the period is 8 days.

[3] The list applies to municipalities in the canton of Neuchâtel. Requirements may vary slightly depending on the canton or municipality, so please check the specific information before starting the process.

Applicants for **family reunification** must present the following documents[2]:

- Passport or identity card (valid original document)
- Spouse's residence permit
- Up-to-date civil status document (birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce certificate, family record book)
- Birth certificates for children
- Rental lease, property deed, sublease agreement or housing authorization (download here) if you are not the leaseholder.

If you are a **non- EU/EFTA national**, within the first 2 weeks (14 days[4]):

➔ Register with the residents' registration office ("contrôle des habitant-e-s") in your municipality of residence.

You will apply for a residence permit at this time. You will then need to provide a copy of the permit to the University's Human Resources Department.

You need to present the following documents[5]:

- Passport (valid original document)
- Up-to-date civil status documents (birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce certificate, family record book)
- Authorization from the cantonal migration service
- Rental lease, property deed, sublease agreement or housing authorization (download here) if you are not the leaseholder.

Applicants for **family reunification** must present the following documents:

- Passport (valid original document)
- Up-to-date civil status document (birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce certificate, family record book)
- Residence permit insurance or guarantee of return (issued by the cantonal migration service)
- Spouse's residence permit
- Birth certificates for children
- Rental lease, property deed, sublease agreement or housing authorization (download here) if you are not the leaseholder.

If you **have a vehicle** and are staying in Switzerland for more than 12 months:

➔ You must exchange your foreign driver's license and your vehicle's license plates within 12 months of moving to Switzerland.

For the canton of Neuchâtel, it is recommended that you contact the "Service des automobiles" no later than 10 months after your arrival: https://www.scan-ne.ch/conducteur/administratif/administratif-et-donnees-personnelles/etablissement-dans-le-canton-en-provenance-de-letranger).

💡 Your vehicle must be declared to customs upon entry into Switzerland.

[4] Please note: this 14-day period applies to municipalities in the canton of Neuchâtel and most other Swiss municipalities. However, it may vary depending on the canton or municipality; for example in the canton of Vaud, the period is 8 days.

[5] The list applies to municipalities in the canton of Neuchâtel. Requirements may vary slightly depending on the canton or municipality, so please check the specific information before starting the process.

You can find further information and contact details on the City of Neuchâtel website:

- https://www.neuchatelville.ch/vivre-a-neuchatel/habitant-e-s/arrivees

2. During the first 3 months (but not beyond!):

➔ Take out **health insurance**.

🛈 *Health insurance is mandatory in Switzerland. You have three months from your arrival to register with a health insurance company. After this period, the cantonal health insurance office will automatically register you with an insurer. The insurance will take effect retroactively from the date aou register with your municipality of residence.*

- More information:
  - Ch.ch: https://www.ch.ch/en/foreign-nationals-in-switzerland/living-in-switzerland/taking-out-health-insurance/
  - Federal Office of Public Health: https://www.bag.admin.ch/en/health-insurance
- Compare premiums (in French, German, or Italian): https://www.priminfo.admin.ch/fr/praemien

3. Take out **other insurance policies** (e.g., accident, supplementary health, or household insurance…)

➔ ***Accident insurance***

🛈 *If you are an employee and work more than 8 hours a week, you are insured against accidents by your employer. If this does not apply to you (or to members of your family), you must take out accident insurance for non-work-related accidents through your health insurance.*

- More information:
  - Ch.ch: https://www.ch.ch/en/insurance/accident-insurance/
  - Federal Office of Public Health: https://www.bag.admin.ch/en/accident-insurance

➔ ***Supplementary (health) insurance***

🛈 *Supplementary health insurance is not compulsory. It covers services that are not covered by basic health insurance. Each health insurance company is free to determine which services are included in its supplementary insurance. These policies are therefore optional, and insurers are not required to accept every application.*

- More information:
  - Ch.ch: https://www.ch.ch/en/foreign-nationals-in-switzerland/living-in-switzerland/taking-out-health-insurance/#supplementary-insurance

➔ ***Liability insurance***

🛈 *Personal liability insurance ("RC" in French) covers damage you cause to third parties. This insurance is not compulsory in Switzerland but is often requested when renting a property. In addition, all motor vehicle owners must take out separate motor vehicle liability insurance.*

Private liability insurance should not be confused with household insurance, which covers damage to your property (household contents) in situations such as fire, water damage, natural disasters, or theft.

- More information:
  - Ch.ch: https://www.ch.ch/en/insurance/personal-liability-insurance/
- Compare premiums: https://en.comparis.ch/hausrat-versicherung/comparison/input?insuranceType=2&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=VHH%20(s-ch-fr)%20%7C%20Hausratversicherungen%20FR%20-

%20550204&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=18411497&gclid=Cj0KCQjw64jDBhDXARIsABkk8J5PhA2IgHEMDp1yPCudgUkdfxidEvAeWuYiwWWkfAn8t-oCzcIylsoaAqCHE-ALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

4. Open a **bank account**.

➔ Please bring the following documents with you:

- Your residence certificate (delivered by the immigration office or municipality) or your residence permit, if you already have it
- Your passport or ID
- An Invitation letter or employment contract from UniNE

💡 You can also check with your current bank to see whether it has branches in Switzerland or whether it can open a Swiss bank account.

5. Consider buying your **travel card for public transport** in Neuchâtel (see the transn Webshop)

➢ More information:

- City of Neuchâtel: https://www.neuchatelville.ch/sortir-et-decouvrir/transport-et-deplacement
- Neuchâtel public transports: https://www.transn.ch/
- Swiss Federal Railways: https://www.sbb.ch/en

Other information to help your settle in the Neuchâtel region

Mobile phone and internet

If you would like to take out a mobile phone or internet contract, contact a shop or a service provider for more information.

➢ Major providers include:

- *Salt - Store: e.g., Rue de l'Hôpital 20, 2000 Neuchâtel*
- *Sunrise - Shop: e.g,. Grand-Rue 4, 2000 Neuchâtel*
- *Swisscom - Shop: e.g,. Rue Saint-Honoré 5, 2000, Neuchâtel*

➢ *Comparison of subscriptions and packages, e.g.: https://en.comparis.ch/telecom*

💡 The university offers permanent UniNE employees access to special rates with Swisscom: https://mydoc.unine.ch/fr/T%C3%A9l%C3%A9phonie/TelephonieCMN

Transport

Neuchâtel is easily accessible by plane, car, or train.

The UniNE campus is spread across several locations throughout the town, but the buildings are easily accessible on foot or by public transport.

Switzerland has well-developed public transport system, although it can be quite expensive.

➢ More information:

- Access and map of UniNE: https://www.unine.ch/campus/acces-et-plans/
- SBB (Swiss Federal Railways): https://www.sbb.ch/en
- TransN (Neuchâtel public transport): https://www.transn.ch/

French classes

The University of Neuchâtel's Institute of French Language and Civilization specializes in teaching French to non-French speakers.

- More resources:
  - Online resources: https://www.unine.ch/ilcf/ressource-dapprentissage-en-ligne/
  - Tandem: https://www.unine.ch/cdl/en/tandem/