

Checklist for Researchers Joining the University of Fribourg from Abroad

Before coming to Switzerland:

1. Secure an **invitation** from a Unifr professor or a **work contract** with the University of Fribourg.
2. **Determine whether you need a visa.** If you do, start the application with your local Swiss embassy/consulate as soon as your stay in Fribourg is confirmed. You will not be allowed to come into the country to conduct research before receiving the appropriate entry document.
3. Reach out to the Welcome Center for Academics to announce your arrival: welcome-academics@unifr.ch.
 - Describe your **situation/profile**: What is the purpose of your stay at Unifr? (work contract, invitation for a research stay, completing a PhD, etc.) Where are you from? Include any relevant information.
 - Explain **how we can help you**: Do you need help understanding the immigration process? Do you need to sign up with Unifr? Do you need information on insurance?
4. Find **accommodation**.
5. Make sure you have a **valid status at the University of Fribourg** – either as an employee, a visiting researcher, or a scholarship holder. Please note that if you need to be admitted as a doctoral student or a postdoctoral researcher, the process can take a few weeks, so do not wait for the last minute.
6. **If you need a work permit**, HR submits the request for you. When a work permit is required, please note that you will not be allowed to conduct research in Switzerland before it has been issued.
7. **Determine whether you need to take out health insurance.** If you have health insurance at home, please contact your provider to ensure you will be covered while in Switzerland.

Arrival in Switzerland

8. Once you have secured all the required documents and have found a place to stay: **Welcome to Switzerland!**
9. If you are staying longer than 3 months, you have 14 days upon your arrival to **announce you have arrived in Switzerland**:
 - First, notify SPOMI by submitting the “Arrival Form,”
 - Second, notify your city of residence by going to the “contrôle des habitants.”
10. If you need Swiss **health insurance**, you have 3 months to take out coverage. Please note that the coverage is retroactive; you will be covered from your arrival day provided that you sign the contract within 3 months.

My stay in Switzerland is coming to an end

11. Cancel your lease. Please note that depending on the agency, there may be strict deadlines on which you can cancel the lease, so do it early enough.
12. If you took out Swiss insurance, notify your insurance provider.
13. Inform SPOMI: guidelines in [French](#) or [German](#).
14. Notify the “contrôle des habitants.”
15. Inform Serafe.

Welcome Center for Academics – July 2025