

GMS Flash Alert

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Switzerland – COVID-19: Extension of Flexible Social Security Rules to 31 December

Switzerland has extended “The Application of the Flexibility Rules,” pertaining to the application of standard social security rules and procedures, to 31 December 2021 for some neighbouring countries.¹

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there have been extensive implications for the global workforce. In order to mitigate the negative effects of such implications, Switzerland is in close communication with its counterparts in the European Union (EU)/European Free Trade Association (EFTA) to continuously coordinate the application of social security rules in a cross-border context during the pandemic.

In this regard, Switzerland has mutual agreements with all bordering countries to apply a certain degree of flexibility in terms of the regulations on social security coordination. An overview of the current status of such agreements is provided below, as an update to our previous [GMS Flash Alert 2020-492](#), 11 December 2020.

WHY THIS MATTERS

COVID-19 has led to many cross-border employees being displaced, which could lead to a switch of the social security status of employees in Europe if the social security coordination rules are applied. In recognition of this fact, Swiss authorities have agreed with neighbouring countries to retain the social security status of the employees as before the travel restrictions due to COVID-19 came into force.

The relaxation of the coordination of social security rules due to COVID-19 provides assurances to employers that their administrative obligations are kept to a minimum and that they remain compliant despite the significant disruption that COVID-19 has caused.

Context

Flexible understanding of international social security rules amongst the EU and EFTA countries has been extended, but is regularly subject to review and is expected to end with increasing normalisation of the situation. The Application of the Flexibility Rules was updated as noted below.

Overview of Mutual Agreements between Switzerland and EU / EFTA Countries

Country	Application of flexible social security regulations	Current validity	Extended validity* *as of 11. June 2021
Germany	Yes	30.06.2021	31.12.2021
France	Yes	30.06.2021	30.09.2021
Italy	Yes	30.06.2021	31.12.2021
Austria	Yes	30.06.2021	31.12.2021
Liechtenstein	Yes	30.06.2021	31.12.2021
Other EU/EFTA countries	Yes, unilateral agreement from a Swiss perspective, but no fixed agreements in place	31.12.2020	30.06.2021

Source: KPMG in Switzerland

FOOTNOTE:

1 See: [Coronavirus: Auswirkungen auf die Sozialversicherungen im internationalen Kontext \(admin.ch\)](https://www.bsv.admin.ch/bsv/de/home/sozialversicherungen/int/grundlagen-und-abkommen/int-corona.html) (<https://www.bsv.admin.ch/bsv/de/home/sozialversicherungen/int/grundlagen-und-abkommen/int-corona.html>) (in German with links to French- and Italian-language versions).

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Contact us

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