



# LEXATLAS

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COMPASS

Cross-Border Marriage Kit

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FRA ↔ CHE

# CROSS-BORDER MARIAGE KIT

## FRA – CHE

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### Overview

CATEGORY	FRANCE	SWITZERLAND
AUTHORITIES IN CHARGE	Town Hall (Mairie) – civil registrar. <b>Banns</b> must be posted ( <b>10 days</b> ).	Civil registry office (Zivilstandsamt / Office de l'état civil). Civil marriage is the <b>only legally valid</b> form.
COSTS	Civil ceremony is <b>free</b> ; extra costs apply for <b>translations, apostilles</b> , and document copies.	Civil ceremony costs vary by <b>canton</b> , usually <b>300–500 CHF</b> . Additional fees for translations and certificates.
PROCESSING TIMES	<b>Banns posting</b> at least <b>10 days</b> . File preparation ~ <b>1–2 months</b> depending on documents.	File verification by Zivilstandsamt: usually <b>2–6 weeks</b> . Once approved, the authorisation is <b>valid for 3 months</b> .
LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS	Documents must be in <b>French</b> (or translated into French by a <b>sworn translator</b> ).	Switzerland has <b>3 official languages</b> (French, German, Italian). Documents must be submitted in the <b>local canton's language</b> . Translations often required.
APOSTILLE / LEGALISATION	Switzerland and France both apply the <b>CIEC Convention</b> and are parties to the <b>Hague Apostille Convention</b> . Many civil-status documents are accepted in <b>multilingual extract format</b> , avoiding apostilles.	Same: Swiss authorities accept <b>multilingual extracts</b> of French certificates. Apostille required only for non-CIEC documents.
IMMIGRATION EFFECT	Swiss spouse in France applies for a <b>long-stay visa (VLS-TS)</b> → then <b>residence permit</b> (Vie privée et familiale).	French spouse in Switzerland: entitled to residence under <b>FR–CH bilateral agreements (free movement of persons)</b> but must register with the <b>commune</b> after arrival.

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### Legal Requirements

#### FRANCE

- **Civil marriage** at the **Town Hall (Mairie)** is the **only legally valid** form; religious ceremonies have **no legal effect**.
- **Where you can marry:** commune of **residence** of one spouse (or of a **parent**) with a **1-month residence link** at the date of banns posting.
- **Banns:** must be posted at the mairie for **10 days** before the ceremony (**Code civil** arts. 63–64).
- **Witnesses:** **2 to 4** adults with valid ID (standard French rules).

#### Documents typically requested (Swiss partner):

- **Passport/ID** and **full birth certificate** (recent).
- **Certificate of no impediment** issued by Swiss civil status authorities (**Ehefähigkeitszeugnis / Certificat de capacité matrimoniale**) — many mairies ask for it in practice.
- **Proof of residence** in the French commune; prior **marriage dissolution** documents if applicable.
- **Translations:** non-French documents → **sworn French translation**; **multilingual civil-status extracts** are accepted under **CIEC** (no legalisation).

**Notes:** rules on **where** you can marry + **residence month** + **banns** are explicitly on **Service-Public**. Acceptance of **multilingual extracts w/out legalisation** comes from the **International Commission on Civil Status (CIEC)** convention.

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### SWITZERLAND

- **Civil marriage** before the **civil registry office** (**Zivilstandsamt** / **Office de l'état civil**) is the **only legally valid** form. A **preparatory procedure** is **mandatory**.
- **No banns** in Switzerland since **1 January 2000** (old publication requirement abolished).
- **Documents**: submitted in person (or via Swiss representation if abroad); **originals not older than 6 months**; **photocopies not accepted**; **additional documents** may be requested by the authority.
- **French citizen requirements**: obtain the **French CCAM** (*Certificat de Capacité à Mariage*) **before** the Swiss ceremony (French consulate handles banns & issues the CCAM).
- **Validity window**: once the Swiss authority approves the file, the **marriage must be celebrated within ~3 months** (cantonal guidance).
- **Translations & authentication**: CH and FR both issue **multilingual civil-status extracts** recognised **without legalisation** under CIEC; otherwise, Swiss practice may require **apostille** and **sworn translation** depending on the document/canton.
- **Names**: after marriage in Switzerland, each spouse **keeps their surname** unless they **declare a common surname** (factsheets by the Swiss Federal Office of Justice).

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### Marrying in France (with a Swiss citizen)

#### DOCUMENTS

- **Passports/IDs** for both spouses.
- **French spouse:** recent **birth certificate** ( $\leq 3$  months).
- **Swiss spouse:** recent **birth certificate** ( $\leq 6$  months) + **Certificate of capacity to marry** (*Ehefähigkeitszeugnis* / *Certificat de capacité matrimoniale*).
- **Proof of residence** in the commune (utility bill, lease, attestation).
- If previously married: **divorce decree** or **death certificate** (with apostille/translation if needed).
- **2–4 witnesses** with valid **ID**.
- **Translations:** all Swiss documents must be translated into **French** by a **sworn translator**, unless provided in **multilingual format** (CIEC).

#### STEPS & TIMELINE

1. **Collect documents** (allow **4–6 weeks** for Swiss EFZ + translations).
2. File submission at the **mairie** of residence.
3. Possible **pre-marriage interview (audition)** if requested.
4. **Publication of banns** for **10 days**.
5. **Civil ceremony** at the Town Hall with **2–4 witnesses**.
6. Delivery of the **French marriage certificate** + **livret de famille**.
7. Swiss spouse registers marriage in Switzerland (via consulate or civil status office).

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### Marrying in Switzerland (with a French citizen)

#### DOCUMENTS

- **Passports/IDs** for both spouses.
- **Swiss spouse:** recent **birth certificate** ( $\leq 6$  months).
- **French spouse:** recent **birth certificate** ( $\leq 3$  months).
- **French CCAM (Certificat de Capacité à Mariage)** issued by the French Consulate in Switzerland.
- **Certificate of domicile/residence** for both spouses.
- If previously married: **divorce decree** or **death certificate**.
- **Translations:** French documents may need to be translated into the **local canton's language** (German, French, or Italian) if not already multilingual.

#### STEPS & TIMELINE

1. **Open the marriage file** at the **Swiss Zivilstandsamt / Office de l'état civil**.
2. Authority checks documents; may request additional ones.
3. Once approved, the **marriage authorisation is valid for 3 months**.
4. **Civil ceremony** takes place at the Zivilstandsamt.
5. Swiss **marriage certificate** issued immediately.
6. For French recognition → submit Swiss certificate to the **French Consulate** or **SCEC Nantes** for **transcription**.
7. Once transcribed → obtain the **French livret de famille**.

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### Recognition in the other country

#### French marriage recognized in Switzerland

REQUIREMENT	HOW TO PROVIDE	WHERE	TIMING	NOTES
<b>MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE</b>	Obtain an official <b>French marriage certificate</b> (multilingual extract if possible).	From the <b>mairie</b> where the marriage was celebrated.	Immediately after wedding.	Swiss authorities prefer <b>multilingual extracts</b> to avoid translations.
<b>APOSTILLE / LEGALISATION</b>	<b>Not required</b> under the <b>CIEC Convention</b> (France & Switzerland are members).	N/A	N/A	Civil-status documents circulate without apostille between FR-CH.
<b>TRANSLATION</b>	Only needed if certificate is not issued in <b>multilingual format</b> .	<b>Sworn translator</b> in Switzerland.	Few days.	French certificates in multilingual format are directly accepted.
<b>REGISTRATION IN SWITZERLAND</b>	Register the marriage in the local <b>Zivilstandsamt / Office de l'état civil</b> .	Local civil status office (commune/canton).	Few weeks.	Registration ensures recognition for Swiss residence & administrative purposes.



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### Swiss marriage recognized in France

REQUIREMENT	HOW TO PROVIDE	WHERE	TIMING	NOTES
<b>MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE</b>	Obtain Swiss <b>marriage certificate</b> (multilingual extract preferred).	Issued by Swiss <b>Zivilstandsamt</b> .	Immediately after wedding.	Multilingual version avoids French translation.
<b>APOSTILLE / LEGALISATION</b>	<b>Not required</b> under <b>CIEC Convention</b> .	N/A	N/A	FR–CH exempt from apostille for civil status.
<b>TRANSLATION</b>	Only needed if no multilingual extract is available.	<b>Sworn French translator</b> ( <i>traducteur assermenté</i> ).	Few days.	Normally unnecessary due to multilingual forms.
<b>TRANSCRIPTION IN FRANCE</b>	Submit certificate for <b>transcription</b> to obtain <b>livret de famille</b> .	French Consulate in Switzerland or <b>SCEC Nantes</b> .	1–3 months.	Transcription is <b>mandatory</b> for use in French administration (residence, children, visas).

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### Special cases & red flags

- **Residence condition in France** → To marry in France, at least **one spouse must reside** in the commune (or have a parental link) for about **1 month** before the ceremony.
- **Banns vs. no banns** → In **France**, **banns must be published for 10 days**; in **Switzerland**, **banns were abolished** (no public posting required).
- **Validity of documents** → Swiss and French **birth certificates** must be recent (**≤ 6 months**). Older certificates are rejected.
- **Marriage authorisation in Switzerland** → Once approved by the **Zivilstandsamt**, the authorisation is **valid only for 3 months**. If the marriage is not celebrated in that window, the procedure must restart.
- **Translations** → Documents must be translated into the **local official language** (French, German, Italian) of the Swiss canton, unless provided in **multilingual format**. In France, documents must be translated into **French** by a **sworn translator**.
- **CIEC Convention** → Between France and Switzerland, **apostille/legalisation is not required** for civil-status documents (multilingual extracts accepted).
- **Immigration impact** →
  - A **Swiss spouse in France** must apply for a **VLS-TS** long-stay visa, then a **residence card** (Vie privée et familiale).
  - A **French spouse in Switzerland** benefits from **free movement of persons agreements**, but must **register with the commune** of residence.

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### Checklists

#### FRANCE

- Contact the **mairie** to confirm the **list of documents** required.
- Collect **passports/IDs** for both spouses.
- Obtain a **recent French birth certificate** ( $\leq 3$  months).
- Obtain a **Swiss birth certificate** ( $\leq 6$  months).
- Request a **Swiss certificate of no impediment** (*Ehefähigkeitszeugnis* / *Certificat de capacité matrimoniale*).
- Provide **proof of residence** in the commune (utility bill, lease, attestation).
- If previously married → add **divorce decree** or **death certificate** (with translation if necessary).
- Arrange **sworn French translations** of Swiss documents unless issued in **multilingual format** (CIEC).
- Submit the **marriage file** to the mairie.
- Attend the **pre-marriage interview (audition)** if requested.
- Ensure **publication of banns** for **10 days**.
- Celebrate the **civil ceremony** at the mairie with **2–4 witnesses**.
- Obtain the **French marriage certificate** and **livret de famille**.

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### SWITZERLAND

- Contact the **local Zivilstandsamt / Office de l'état civil** to start the procedure.
- Collect **passports/IDs** for both spouses.
- Obtain a **Swiss birth certificate** ( $\leq 6$  months).
- Obtain a **French birth certificate** ( $\leq 3$  months).
- Request a **Certificat de Capacité à Mariage (CCAM)** from the French Consulate in Switzerland.
- Provide **certificate of residence/domicile** for both spouses.
- If previously married → add **divorce decree** or **death certificate**.
- Provide **sworn translations** into the canton's language (German, French, or Italian) if needed.
- Submit the file to the **Zivilstandsamt**.
- Wait for **approval of marriage authorisation** (valid **3 months**).
- Celebrate the **civil ceremony** at the Zivilstandsamt.
- Obtain the **Swiss marriage certificate** (multilingual extract recommended).
- For recognition in France → submit to the **French Consulate** or **SCEC Nantes** for **transcription**.
- Once transcribed → receive the **French livret de famille**.

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### Templates

This section provides **official resources and sample documents** commonly required :

Use the hyperlinks below to access the official template or instruction page.

#### 1. France – Statutory Declaration / Attestation of Single Status

Often requested by French mairies when marrying a Swiss citizen.

 [Access the Attestation sur l'honneur template \(Service-Public\)](#)

#### 2. Switzerland – Certificate of Capacity to Marry

Issued by Swiss civil status offices (Zivilstandsamt). Required for Swiss citizens marrying abroad.

 [ch.ch/marriage](https://ch.ch/marriage)

#### 3. France – Certificate of Capacity to Marry (CCAM)

Issued by French consulates abroad — needed for marriages in Switzerland.

 [ma.consulfrance.org/ccam](https://ma.consulfrance.org/ccam)

#### 4. France/Switzerland – Sworn Translator Directories

France and Switzerland both require sworn translators for legal document translations.

 [service-public.fr/traducteurs](https://service-public.fr/traducteurs)

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### Official Sources

TOPIC	NOTES	AUTHORITY / URL
<b>SERVICE-PUBLIC FRANCE – MARRIAGE WITH A FOREIGNER</b>	Official French government page explaining requirements when marrying a foreign national in France.	<a href="https://service-public.fr/marier-etranger">service-public.fr/marier-etranger</a>
<b>SERVICE-PUBLIC FRANCE – MARRIAGE CELEBRATED ABROAD (TRANSCRIPTION)</b>	Guidance for French citizens to register a marriage celebrated in Switzerland into French civil records.	<a href="https://service-public.fr/transcrire-mariage">service-public.fr/transcrire-mariage</a>
<b>FRENCH CONSULATE IN SWITZERLAND – MARRIAGE &amp; CCAM</b>	Consulate page detailing procedures for obtaining the <b>Certificat de Capacité à Mariage (CCAM)</b> .	<a href="https://ch.ambafrance.org/Zurich-CCAM">ch.ambafrance.org/Zurich-CCAM</a>
<b>SWISS CONFEDERATION – MARRIAGE</b>	Swiss federal portal explaining marriage procedures, civil registry offices, and required documents.	<a href="https://ch.ch/marriage">ch.ch/marriage</a>
<b>FEDERAL OFFICE OF JUSTICE (SWITZERLAND) – CIVIL STATUS</b>	Official information on civil status law, registry offices, and multilingual extracts.	<a href="https://eda.admin.ch/civil-status">eda.admin.ch/civil-status</a>

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### Glossary & Notes

TERM	DEFINITION / NOTES
BANNS	Public notice of intended marriage required in <b>France</b> . Must be posted at the mairie for <b>10 days</b> before the ceremony. <b>Abolished in Switzerland</b> since 2000.
EHEFÄHIGKEITSZEUGNIS / CERTIFICAT DE CAPACITÉ MATRIMONIALE	Swiss <b>certificate of no impediment to marriage</b> , proving the person is legally free to marry. Often required by French mairies for Swiss spouses.
CCAM (CERTIFICAT DE CAPACITÉ À MARIAGE)	French <b>certificate of capacity to marry</b> , issued by the French Consulate in Switzerland. Mandatory for French citizens marrying there.
ZIVILSTANDSAMT / OFFICE DE L'ÉTAT CIVIL	Swiss <b>civil registry office</b> where marriages are celebrated. Handles preparatory procedures and issues Swiss marriage certificates.
MARRIAGE AUTHORISATION (SWITZERLAND)	Once documents are approved, Swiss authorisation is valid for <b>3 months only</b> ; if the marriage doesn't take place, the process must be restarted.
MULTILINGUAL EXTRACTS (CIEC)	France and Switzerland are parties to the <b>CIEC Convention</b> : civil-status documents (birth, marriage, death) can be issued in <b>multilingual format</b> without apostille/legalisation.
TRANSCRIPTION	The process of recording a <b>Swiss marriage</b> into French civil registers (via consulate or SCEC Nantes) to obtain a <b>livret de famille</b> .
LIVRET DE FAMILLE	Official French family record book issued after transcription. Needed for administrative procedures (residence, visas, registering children).
FREE MOVEMENT AGREEMENT (FR-CH)	Bilateral accords allowing French spouses to reside in Switzerland and Swiss spouses to reside in France, subject to <b>local registration</b> (commune or prefecture).

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### Annexes

ANNEX	TITLE	FILE
<b>MARRIAGE WITH A FOREIGNER IN FRANCE</b>	French government guidance on conditions & documents for marrying a foreign spouse.	<a href="https://service-public.fr/marier-etranger">service-public.fr/marier-etranger</a>
<b>MARRIAGE ABROAD – TRANSCRIPTION</b>	How to register a Swiss marriage in French civil records (via consulate or SCEC Nantes).	<a href="https://service-public.fr/transcrire-mariage">service-public.fr/transcrire-mariage</a>
<b>FRENCH CONSULATE IN SWITZERLAND – MARRIAGE PROCEDURES</b>	Guidance on banns, CCAM, and transcription for French citizens marrying in Switzerland.	<a href="https://ch.ambafrance.org/Zurich-CCAM">ch.ambafrance.org/Zurich-CCAM</a>
<b>SWISS CONFEDERATION – MARRIAGE</b>	Official Swiss federal portal explaining marriage process and civil registry offices.	<a href="https://ch.ch/marriage">ch.ch/marriage</a>



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### Legal Disclaimer & Thank You

This Cross-Border Marriage Kit has been carefully researched and compiled to provide practical guidance for international couples.

However, it does **not constitute legal advice**.

- Laws and procedures may change at any time.
- Requirements may vary depending on the specific **State** or **French municipality** involved.
- Always verify your situation directly with the **competent civil authorities**, embassies, or consulates before submitting documents.
- LexAtlas cannot be held liable for any administrative delays, changes in law, or outcomes arising from the use of this guide.

For complex or exceptional cases (previous marriages, immigration complications, name changes, adoption, or nationality issues), we strongly recommend consulting a qualified attorney or notary.

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