

Swiss Security Clearance for Horizon Europe

Introduction

Security Clearance might be required for Horizon Europe topics dealing with classified information. This applies in particular to projects funded under the Cluster 3, Civil Security. Civilian third persons in Switzerland may obtain Security Clearance by the process described below.¹

Security Clearance for Civilian Third Persons

1. The legal basis for the Security Clearance of civilian third persons is the Ordinance on the Personnel Security Screening (PSPV).²
 2. Civilian third persons are civilian persons who are not employed by the federal government (PSPV art. 6).
 3. The Personnel Security Clearance of civilian third persons is the responsibility of the Specialist Unit for Security Assessment of the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport (www.aios.ch; PSPV, art. 3).
 4. Security clearance is valid for 5 years (PSPV, art. 18).
 5. Requests for Horizon Europe security clearance must be addressed to the delegate for the Civil Security Work Programme at the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).
 6. In order to initialize Horizon Europe security clearance, the European Commission must make an application and submit a Personnel Security Clearance Information Sheet (PSCIS).
 7. If at this stage there are no open questions, the SERI delegate informs the applicant about the documentation she/he has to provide for security clearance. The SERI delegate then guides the applicant through the process of filling out the dedicated form. Thereafter, the form can be sent to the PSP Specialist Unit (PSPV, art. 14).
 8. After the submission process, the Specialist Unit of the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport will provide a risk evaluation, usually within 3 months (PSPV, art. 22, para. 1).
 9. If the evaluation is positive, the applicant receives a Declaration of Security (PSPV, art. 22, para 1a). The competent authority (PSPV, art. 24/25) then gives the applicant the right to access classified information in Switzerland. This right is restricted by the principle of “need to know”.
 10. If the civilian third person concerned requires access to classified information from abroad, the section “Legal and International Affairs” in the Directorate for Information Security and Facility Protection (IOS) issues a Personnel Security Clearance Attestation, PSCA.
- For further questions please contact your SERI delegate.

¹ For questions related to Legal Third Entities please contact the delegate for the Civil Security Work Programme at the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

² Verordnung über die Personensicherheitsprüfungen, PSPV (<https://www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20092321/index.html>).

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