

Advice - Getting Married in China – Swiss Citizens.

The Embassy is not a civil registrar office and cannot perform wedding ceremonies.

Swiss citizens must, in most cases, present their passport and a personal record sheet (Personenstandsausweis/fiche d'état civil), that can be obtained from the registrar office of the place of origin in Switzerland (Heimatort/commune d'origine). This record sheet must be translated into Chinese and legalised at the Chinese Embassy (Kalcheggweg 10, 3006 Bern, Tel.: 031/351 45 93, Fax: 031/351 45 73). The legalisation of the document through the relevant State Chancery or the Federal Chancery in Berne (Staatskanzlei/chancellerie du canton d'origine or Bundeskanzlei/chancellerie fédérale) is also required.

If the personal record sheet has to be legalised by the Swiss Embassy in Beijing or the Swiss Consulate General in Shanghai, it also has to be legalised previously by the relevant State Chancery or the Federal Chancery in Berne.

As the requirements in China are not the same everywhere, it is recommended that you ask the civil registrar office where you want to get married what documents are requested.

Marriage in Switzerland

Should you wish to marry in Switzerland, you will have to sign the "Application for preparatory procedure for marriage" and the "Declaration preconcerting conditions for entering into marriage" (download below) at this Embassy to start the procedure. Please make an appointment, bring your passport and all documents mentioned below with you.

- Application for preparatory procedure for marriage
- Declaration preconcerting conditions for entering into marriage

Documents and information required by this Embassy

a) from the Chinese citizen

Certificate of marital status that indicates that the person is either single, divorced or widowed. If the person is divorced, the decree of divorce must be presented. *(The single status certificate should be obtained before the marriage! After the marriage the Chinese civil registry offices do not issue such a document anymore. In this case you should declare*

at the public notary that you have been single before the marriage.)

- Birth certificate with names of the parents
- Certificate of residence
- Marriage certificate (if married in China)
- Chinese passport

b) from the Swiss citizen

- a photocopy of his/her personal record sheet (Personenstandsausweis/fiche d'état civil)
- a photocopy of his/her Swiss Passport
- address

if the marriage takes place in Switzerland, address of the civil registry office

The marriage procedure is subject to a fee.

What to do with the Chinese documents

These documents have to be translated by a notary public in English, German, Italian or French and should not be older than 6 months.

For the registration/transmission to the Swiss civil registry all documents have to be legalised by the consular section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing. Please contact the following organisation, which has been chosen by the Chinese Foreign Ministry to receive documents for legalisation purpose:

Visa office (Legalisation)
China Travel Service Head Office
8 Dongjiaominxiang
100005 Beijing

Tel. 6559 3748
Fax: 6512 8908

Additional information

Family name of the wife

The family name of the wife is regulated by the International Private Law.

1. China

a) The wife keeps the family name she had before the wedding.

2. Switzerland

a) the wife changes her family name by taking the one of her husband, or

- b) she puts her family name before the name of her husband and uses therefore a double name (not hyphenated), or
- c) the couple can apply to use the family name of the wife as the family name of the whole family.
- d) the foreign partner can ask that his name follows the law of his/her country.

The Swiss wife-to-be with residency in China can choose if she wants to adopt the Swiss regulation regarding the name.

All declarations or decisions regarding the name must be handled or deposited before the marriage takes place.

Nationality

Neither the Swiss nor the Chinese nationality can be acquired through the marriage. Each person keeps its/her nationality as before the wedding.

Entry/Visa for Switzerland

Chinese citizens need a visa to go to Switzerland. The application for a visa to get married in Switzerland or to take up residency after the wedding must be made through this Embassy. It will take 2 to 3 months to be processed by the Federal Office for Migration in Switzerland. If you decide to get married in Switzerland, you can apply for the visa at the same time as you come to the Embassy to sign the „Gesuch um Vorbereitung der Eheschliessung/demande en vue du mariage“.

CHECK WITH YOUR EMBASSY OR CONSULATE FOR LATEST INFORMATION.