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**Federal Act
on the Harmonisation of the Register of Residents
and of other Official Registers of Persons
(Register Harmonisation Act, RHA)**

of 23 June 2006 (Status as of 1 January 2022)

The Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation,

based on the Articles 38 paragraph 1, 39 paragraph 1, 40 paragraph 2, 65 paragraph 2, 121 paragraph 1 and 122 paragraph 1 of the Federal Constitution¹, and having considered the Federal Council Dispatch dated 23 November 2005²,
decrees:

Section 1 General Provisions

Art. 1 Aim and subject matter

¹ This Act aims to simplify:

- a. the collection of data for statistics through the harmonisation of official registers of persons (the registers);
- b. the exchange of personal data between the registers provided for by the law.

² For this purpose the Act determines:

- a. the identifiers and attributes that must be recorded in the registers;
- b. the responsibility of the Federal Statistical Office (Federal Office) for the harmonisation of definitions, attributes and attribute characteristics;
- c. the requirement of completeness and accuracy in the registers;
- d. the obligation to update the registers of residents.

Art. 2 Scope of application

¹ This Act applies to the following registers:

- a. the computerised civil status register (Infostar) maintained by the cantons and operated by the Federal Office of Justice;

AS 2006 4165

¹ SR 101

² BBl 2006 427

- b the Central Migration Information System (ZEMIS) of the State Secretariat for Migration³;
 - c. the Ordipro information system of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs;
 - d.⁴ the information system for the networked administration of data on and for the Swiss Abroad (E-VERA⁵) maintained by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs;
 - e.⁶ the Central Register of Insured Persons, the Central Pensions Register and the Register of Benefits-in-Kind of the Central Compensation Office in accordance with Article 71 of the Federal Act of 20 December 1946⁷ on Old-Age and Survivors' Insurance (OASIA);
 - f.⁸ the information system of the Central Compensation Office for processing data related to supplementary benefits in accordance with Article 71 OASIA.
- ² It also applies to the cantonal and communal:
- a. registers of residents;
 - b. electoral registers that serve as the basis for federal popular votes and elections to the National Council.

Art. 3 Definitions

In this Act the terms below are defined as follows:

- a. *register of residents*: register maintained manually or electronically by the canton or the commune, in which anyone who is permanently settled or is resident in the canton or in the commune is recorded;
- b. *commune of permanent settlement*: commune in which a person resides with the intention of remaining there permanently, in order to establish the focus of his or her life there, as must be recognisable to others; a person is regarded as permanently settled in the commune in which he or she has deposited the required document, and may have only one commune of permanent settlement;

³ The name of this administrative unit was amended by Art. 16 para. 3 of the Publications Ordinance of 17 Nov. 2004 (AS **204** 4937) as of 1 Jan. 2015.

⁴ Amended by Annex No III 3 of the Swiss Abroad Act of 26 Sept. 2014, in force since 1 Nov. 2015 (AS **2015** 3857; BBl **2014** 1915 2617).

⁵ This name was modified on 1 Sept 2016 pursuant to Art. 12 para. 2 of the Publications Act of 18 June 2004 (SR **170.512**).

⁶ Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 22 March 2019 (EL-Reform), in force since 1 Jan. 2021 (AS **2020** 585; BBl **2016** 7465).

⁷ SR **831.10**

⁸ Inserted by Annex No 1 of the Federal Act of 17 June 2011 (Improvement in Implementation) (AS **2011** 4745; BBl **2011** 543). Amended by No II 1 of the FA of 22 March 2019 (EL-Reform), in force since 1 Jan. 2021 (AS **2020** 585; BBl **2016** 7465).

- c. *commune of residence*: commune in which a person resides for a specific purpose, without the intention of remaining there permanently, for a minimum of three consecutive months or three months within a single year; residency for the purpose of attending a educational institution or school and the accommodation of a person in a corrective, residential, or penal institution or hospital constitute a commune of residence;
- d. *household*: unit comprising everyone who lives in the same dwelling;
- e. *identifier*: non-descriptive and invariable number which, as a functional element in a database, permits the clear identification of a person or article;
- f. *attribute*: property of a person or article that may be objectively recorded and described;
- g. *attribute characteristic*: specific value that an attribute may acquire;
- h. *nomenclature*: system for the classification and presentation of attribute characteristics;
- i. *coding key*: code collection that enables the transcription of attribute characteristics recorded in text form into numerical values that can be processed in the computer systems.

Art. 4 Task of the Federal Office

¹ The Federal Office defines the identifiers and attributes in accordance with Articles 6 letters b–t, 7 and 13 paragraph 2 as well as the corresponding attribute characteristics, nomenclatures and coding keys. The recording of data relating to civil status in the registers is governed by Articles 39–49 of the Civil Code⁹.

² In devising the definitions, the Federal Office takes account of the demands and needs of the cantons and communes as well as of the federal agencies that maintain or rely on the registers under Article 2 paragraph 1.

³ It provides the cantons, the communes and the federal agencies under Article 2 paragraph 1 with the required definitions, nomenclatures and coding keys free of charge.

⁴ It regularly publishes an official catalogue of attributes that contains the attribute characteristics as well as the nomenclatures and coding keys.

Art. 5 Completeness of the registers

The registers must be up-to-date, accurate and complete in relation to the group of persons recorded therein.

Section 2 Registers of Residents

Art. 6 Minimum content

As a minimum, the registers of residents contain the data on the following identifiers and attributes of each permanently settled or resident person:

- a. the OASI number¹⁰ under Article 50c OASIA¹¹;
- b. the commune number allocated by the Federal Office and the official commune name;
- c. the building identifier according to the Federal Register of Buildings and Dwellings (RBD) of the Federal Office;
- d. the administrative dwelling identifier according to the RBD, household affiliation and form of household;
- e. the official name and the other names of a person documented in the civil status registers;
- f. all forenames in the correct order;
- g. home address and postal address including postcode and locality;
- h. date of birth and place of birth;
- i. place of origin in the case of Swiss citizens;
- j. sex;
- k. marital status;
- l. affiliation to any religious group recognised under public law or in any other way by the canton;
- m. nationality;
- n. in the case of foreign nationals, type of permit;
- o. permanent settlement or residency in the commune;
- p. commune of permanent settlement or commune of residence;
- q. in the case of arrival in the commune: date and previous commune or previous country;
- r. in the case of leaving the commune: date and commune or country of destination;
- s. in the case of relocation within the commune: date;
- t. right to vote and right to be elected at federal, cantonal and communal level;
- u. date of death.

¹⁰ Term in accordance with Annex No 11 of the FA of 18 Dec. 2020 (Systematic Use of the OASI Number by Authorities), in force since 1 Jan. 2022 (AS **2021** 758; BBl **2019** 7359). This change has been made in the provisions specified in the AS.

¹¹ SR **831.10**

Art. 7 Other attributes

The recording of any attribute not listed in Article 6 is governed by the requirements of the catalogue under Article 4 paragraph 4, provided the attribute is listed in the catalogue.

Art. 8 Determining and updating of administrative dwelling identifiers and household affiliation

¹ In order to determine and update a person's administrative dwelling identifier and household affiliation, the attributes in the RBD may be included in the registers of residents that are required for their maintenance.

² The cantons issue the regulations required in order that commercial undertakings and other agencies maintaining registers provide the data free of charge that is required to determine and update the administrative dwelling identifier of a person to the public agencies that are responsible for maintaining the registers of residents.

³ They may introduce the physical numbering of dwellings for the purpose of determining and updating the administrative dwelling identifier. The physical dwelling numbers are listed as the dwelling number of the canton of or the commune in the RBD.

⁴ The cantons may issue further regulations in order to guarantee the determination and updating of the administrative dwelling identifier.

Art. 9 Responsible office

The cantons shall designate an official agency that is responsible for the coordination, conduct and quality control of the harmonisation measures.

Art. 10 Exchange of data in the event of relocation

¹ The cantons shall issue the regulations required in order that the data defined in Article 6 is exchanged between the registers of residents in the event of the arrival or departure of residents.

² The exchange is carried out electronically and in encrypted form. The encryption is governed by the Federal Act of 19 December 2003¹² on the Electronic Signature. The Federal Council stipulates the modalities for the exchange of data and the interfaces.

³ The Confederation provides the responsible public offices and authorities with an information technology and communication platform for the exchange.

¹² [AS 2004 5085, 2008 3437 No II 55. AS 2016 4651 Annex No I]. See today: the FA of 18 March 2016 (SR 943.03).