

Enterprise identification number (UID) mandatory for Swiss companies

The UID has been the legitimate enterprise identification number used by the commercial register and the value added tax office since January 2014, having superseded both the former commercial register number (or CH number) and the six-digit value added tax number as company identification codes.

The use of a single enterprise identification number helps to ensure accurate identification of companies so that information pertaining to administrative and statistical processes can be exchanged in an easy and safe manner.

A UID will be assigned to a company automatically when it is entered in an administrative register that is linked up with the UID system. Therefore a company that is registered with the commercial register or the VAT department does not have to request a UID from the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. It is possible, however, that a business entity that commences commercial operations and that meets the [definition of a UID entity](#) as specified in art. 3 para. 1, let. c of the federal law on enterprise identification numbers will receive a UID directly from the FSO during the introductory phase of the UID, which will last until the end of 2015. In this case the corresponding [form issued by the FSO](#) must be filled in to receive a UID. You can also request a UID number by calling the UID Hotline at 0800 20 20 10.

Since January 2011 the FSO has assigned a specific and multi-agency enterprise identification number (the UID) to every commercial enterprise active in Switzerland. The UID allows companies to use a single number to establish their identity when dealing with government agencies in Switzerland. It makes interaction between a company and government agencies simpler and more efficient. The FSO maintains a central enterprise register – the UID Register – that the general public can query for UIDs. Businesses do not have to pay anything to be registered in the official UID register of the FSO.

The UID is part of the eGovernment Strategy Switzerland and is a basic requirement for many eGovernment projects. The UID is managed and coordinated within the eGovernment Services organization.

If simap.ch were unable to access the UID data, a separate, proprietary registration process would have to be set up through the simap.ch organization. Consequently, being linked up with the UID system obviates the need for various process steps, for example the submission of written registration requests, the processing and approval of those registration requests, and the subsequent correspondence with the applicants, all of which would entail considerable time.