

Tunisia

Business Travel Guide

Compiled by:

Embassy of Switzerland in Tunis

Tunis, August 2022

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Swiss citizens can travel to Tunisia visa-free for stays up to 90 days. Upon arrival, the authorities may request a confirmed return ticket, a confirmed hotel reservation for the entire stay, and/or confirmation of a sufficient amount of money to cover the expenses of the stay. For stays longer than 90 consecutive days (or more than six months per year overall), a residence visa (*visa de séjour*) and the corresponding residence card (*carte de séjour*) are required, which can be applied for after arrival. A distinction is made between a temporary (*séjour temporaire*) and a permanent status (*séjour ordinaire*). Temporary residence visas are issued for a maximum of one year.

To control the spread of COVID-19, many states have introduced entry and exit restrictions as well as travel restrictions within the country. These regulations change frequently. For the current regulations in force in Tunisia, refer to the information provided by the relevant Tunisian authorities or contact the Embassy of Tunisia in Bern.

Tunis-Carthage International Airport (TUN) is located a 15-minute drive from the city center of Tunis. International airports also exist in Enfidha-Hammamet (NBE), Djerba (DJE), Monastir (MIR), Sfax (SFA), Tabarka (TBJ), Tozeur (TOE), Gafsa (GAF), and Gabès (GAE). Depending on the destination and season, there might be direct flights from Zurich, Geneva, or Basel. Ferries connect the port of Tunis-La Goulette with Marseille (Corsica Linea and CTN) as well as Genoa, Salerno, Palermo, and Civitavecchia (GNV, Grimaldi Lines, and/or CTN).

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Mandatory and recommended vaccinations: In addition to routine vaccinations such as DTP, MMR or Polio, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) recommend vaccinations against COVID-19, Hepatitis A and B, and, depending on the specific travel plans, also rabies and typhoid. A yellow fever vaccination is compulsory only when entering the country from a risk area. The vaccination requirements for COVID-19 are subject to frequent change. For the current regulations in force in

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day (Jour de l'An)	1 January
Islamic New Year (Fête du Ras El Am El Hijri)	Varies*
Independence Day (Fête de l'Indépendance)	20 March
Martyrs' Day (Fête des Martyrs)	9 April
Labor Day (Fête du Travail)	1 May
Eid Al Fitr	Varies*
Eid Al Adha	Varies*
Republic Day (Journée de la République)	25 July
Women's Day (Fête de la Femme)	13 August
Mouled (Birthday of the Prophet)*	Varies*
Evacuation Day (Fête de l'Evacuation)	15 October
Revolution and Youth Day (Fête de la Revolution et de la Jeunesse)	17 December (celebrated on 14 January until 2021)

*Certain holidays are based on the Islamic (lunar) calendar and depend on moon sightings by local religious authorities, which is why they shift annually in comparison to the Gregorian (solar) calendar.

The main holiday season begins end of April and lasts until the end of October or early November.

NATIONAL TRADE FAIR CALENDAR

The dates of the main trade fairs can be obtained from: https://www.eventseye.com/fairs/c1_trade-shows_tunisia.html

COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Tunisia's country code is: +216

Tunisia has three big cellular companies: Ooredoo, Orange, and Tunisia Telecom. With Lycamobile, a fourth but notably smaller operator exists. Local SIM cards can be bought at the airport or at one of the numerous other operators' sales points upon presentation of a valid passport.

Important phone numbers:

Police	197
Fire department	198
Medical emergency	190

Tunisia's information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure is relatively robust. Access to Internet is widespread, though Internet speed continues to be relatively slow. Tunisia's Internet freedom score remains among the highest in the region. The government does not impose any restrictions on ICT connectivity and censorship remains uncommon.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity plug and socket: Type C / E



The voltage in Tunisia is 220/230 V with a frequency of 50 Hz.

There are occasional power outages and voltage variations are frequent (+/- 10% or more). A stabilizer can therefore be very useful, which can be purchased locally.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

National currency in Tunisia is the Tunisian Dinar (TND).

Exchange rate as of August 23, 2022 (Source: XE): CHF 1 = TND 3.3.

The Tunisian Dinar is not freely convertible and the import or export of dinars is illegal. Money can be changed in banks, change offices, and big hotels. ATMs are widely available. In cafés and restaurants, tipping is discretionary but usually expected. Taxi drivers generally do not expect a tip.

Acceptance of methods of payment:

	everywhere	almost everywhere	limited	not accepted
Cash (TND)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cash (USD, EUR, GBP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MasterCard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
American Express	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT

The public transport infrastructure in and around Tunis includes a network of buses, tramways (*métro léger*), and a train line that connects the city center to the northern suburbs. In between cities, the main means of public transportation are the railway network of the SNCFT and the inter-city buses. However, the public transport system is in part antiquated, lacks reliability, and is often not easily accessible to foreigners.

Tunisia's road network is relatively well developed, although regional disparities exist. Taxis are typically easy to find and relatively cheap. When driving, increased caution is recommended due to the unpredictable behavior of some road users.

Taxi fare for a 15 minutes journey: Approx. 5 TND (~1.5 CHF)

Main ride hailing apps: Bolt.

Google Play Store:



App Store:



Main method of payment for taxi and subways: Cash.

Car rental with/without a driver can be arranged at numerous companies (selection):

- Avis <https://www.avis.com/en/home>
- Budget <https://www.budget.com/en/home>
- Europcar / Keddy <https://www.europcar.com/en-us>
- Hertz <https://www.hertz.com/rentacar/reservation/>
- Loisi'rent <https://www.loisirent.com/> (possible with a driver)
- Mamicar <https://www.mamicar.com/> (possible with a driver)
- SGF <http://sgfrentcar.com/>
- Sixt <https://www.sixt.global/>
- Sunnycars <https://www.sunnycars.ch/>
- Tunisia Rent Car <https://www.tunisia-rent-car.com/> (possible with a driver)

ACCOMMODATION, TEMPORARY OFFICE SPACE

Hotel reservations during the high tourist season from April to October are best made well in advance. The search for rental accommodation or office spaces is typically done with the help of a real estate agency, which charges a commission of about one to two months' rent upon conclusion of the contract. In general, a deposit equivalent to two to six months' rent is required and rent is paid in advance for a period of three months to one year. Several co-working spaces exist, mainly in and around the capital.

LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

The official language in Tunisia is Arabic, but French is widely spoken and serves as the language of commerce. An increasing number of Tunisians speak English, Italian, and/or German (especially in larger cities).

BUSINESS PRACTICES

The Tunisian business environment is shaped by a diverse range of influences from the Arab/Muslim, Mediterranean and French cultures. Personal relationships and trust are of high importance. It is thus advisable to build and cultivate a network of business acquaintances, and to extend such a network through mutual acquaintances.

Business appointments should be arranged well in advance and reconfirmed a few days before. It is recommended to avoid meetings in the summer months of July and August as well as during the month of Ramadan. Businesses typically close for lunch and sometimes also for prayer times. It is common for meetings to take place in less formal settings over lunch or dinner.

The business attire is typically formal and conservative for both men and women. Depending on the industry, business casual or informal attire might be acceptable. The most common form of greeting is the handshake. Women might sometimes greet each other by a simple nod. When greeting women, it is appropriate for men to wait for them to extend their hand first. Whereas titles can be important, especially when addressing a high-ranking manager, it is typically appropriate to use the terms “Monsieur” (for men) and “Madame” (for women) followed by the surname. No formal procedure exists for the exchange of business cards. They should, however, be bilingual (Arabic and French) and be exchanged with higher-ranking managers first. Special achievements in business or academia, for example a degree from a prestigious university, as well as courteous manners and a well-groomed appearance can help to make a beneficial and enduring impression.

Foreigners are well-advised to arrive to meetings on time, but should expect that they might be kept waiting. Before the beginning of a business meeting, prolonged small talk is commonplace. This serves to establish a personal relationship and building trust. Delving into negotiations directly can be perceived as rude. Meeting agendas are typically only loosely followed, if at all. Business conversations might frequently get off track or be interrupted. Also, negotiations can be quite lengthy and may take a great deal of deliberation and several visits. The slow decision-making processes should be met with patience, as rushing decisions can be considered an insult. Decision-making is typically strictly hierarchical. Offers should thus be directed at the most senior person in the room, which generally leads the negotiation. Any impression of confrontation, conflict, or hard selling should be avoided. Likewise, attempts at pressure or even open criticism should be refrained from. Tunisians typically prefer courteous, indirect, non-confrontational communication that allows to “save face”. Sensitive topics of discussion could include religion, gender issues, as well as certain political questions.

Small gifts may be exchanged after the first meeting. When invited to a Tunisian home, it is common to bring something small for the hostess and host (fruit, candy, flowers etc.). Alcohol should generally be avoided as a gift, unless it is certain that the recipient will drink it.

BUSINESS RISKS

The ongoing political, economic, and social challenges may pose risks to businesses, including instances of protest and labor unrest. Tunisia’s strained fiscal situation and external liquidity risks could also have an adverse effect on the business environment. Corruption remains an issue, with the country ranked 83rd (out of 196) in the *Global Corruption Index* in 2021, representing a medium risk of corruption. Finally, Tunisia’s security situation (see above) also represents a business risk to take into account. Overall, the [Swiss Export Risk Insurance SERV](#) classifies Tunisia in the highest country risk category.

SERV insures political and *del credere* risks involved in exporting goods and services.

[Products for exporters](#)

[Product for service providers](#)

[Products for financial institutions](#)

The full range of services and products offered by SERV can be obtained at www.serv-ch.com.

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IMPORT OF SAMPLES AND CATALOGUES

Tunisia recognizes the Carnet ATA, an international customs document that can be used for the temporary import, export and transit of goods. Unlike personal belongings, objects of a commercial character may be subject to the payment of duties and taxes (VAT, consumption tax). The Free Trade Agreement between the EFTA countries and Tunisia, which entered into force on 1 June 2005 for Switzerland, covers trade in industrial products, including fish and other marine products, and processed agricultural products. Switzerland and Tunisia have further concluded a bilateral agreement on basic agricultural products.

The following products can be imported without incurring customs duty within the indicated quantities:

Tobacco: Cigarettes: 200 pieces; Cigarillos: 100 pieces; Cigars: 50; Tombac: 500 grams.

Alcohol: Less than 25% vol.: 2 liters; More than 25 % vol.: 1 liter.

The import or export of the Tunisian Dinar (TND) is illegal. The import of foreign currencies, on the other hand, is free. If the amount of foreign currency is equal to or greater than the equivalent of 25'000 TND, however, a declaration must be made to customs upon entry. Non-residents who intend to re-export foreign currencies in an amount equal to or greater than the equivalent of 5'000 TND are required to declare this on the "Declaration of Import of Foreign Currencies" form (*Déclaration d'importation de devises*).

A list of goods prohibited for import or subject to special authorization [can be found here](#).

USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES, ADDRESSES, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Business news <https://www.businessnews.com.tn/>

<https://www.tustex.com/>

<https://www.ilboursa.com/>

<https://www.webmanagercenter.com/>

Customs
hotline

<https://www.douane.gov.tn/>

(+216) 70 279 700

dgd.dg@douane.gov.tn

ADDRESSES OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Switzerland in Tunis

22, Rue Platon

Z.A. Kheireddine

Case postale 73

2015 Le Kram – Tunis, Tunisia

Phone:

Centrale: +216 71 191 997

Visa: +216 71 192 030

VFS Global Visa: +216 70 145 758

Fax:

Prestations consulaires: +216 71 180 250

Visa: +216 71 180 250

Division des tâches diplomatiques: +216 71 180 231

Centrale: tunis@eda.admin.ch

Visa: tunis.visa@eda.admin.ch

Opening times:

Phone hours of the Embassy (incl. the consular section):

Monday – Thursday: 9:00 – 12:30 / 13:30 – 16:30

Friday: 9:00 – 12:30

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Opening hours of the chancellery (consular affairs, marriages, visa for marriage in Switzerland) and the visa section (the latter by appointment only):

Monday – Friday: 9:00 – 12:00

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Phone hours of the visa section:

Monday – Thursday: 14:00 – 16:00

Friday: 8:00 – 10:00

ADDRESSES BILATERAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Tuniso-Suisse

Avenue de la Bourse – Immeuble Saphir

Les Berges du Lac 2, 1053 Tunis, Tunisia

chambretunisosuisse@gmail.com

Chambre de Commerce et de l'Industrie de Tunis

31 Avenue de Paris

1000, Tunis, Tunisia

ccitunis@planet.tn

A list of local chambers of commerce can be found [here](#).

ADDRESSES OF THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF TUNISIA IN OR FOR SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Tunisia in Bern

Kirchenfeldstrasse 63

3005, Bern, Switzerland

Phone: +41 (0)31 352 82 26

Fax: +41 (0)31 351 04 45

at.berne@diplomatie.gov.tn

Opening times (consular services):

Monday – Friday: 9:00 – 13:00

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Date August 23, 2022

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