



SHEPHERD+ WEDDERBURN

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Guide to obtaining an EU passport





# OBTAINING AN EU PASSPORT

Welcome to our guide to getting a European Union (EU) passport. We hope this will be an interesting and practical resource for individuals who want to find out how to obtain citizenship of one of the 28 EU member states, and for immigration lawyers acting on their behalf.

**For many British citizens, the end of EU membership and, as a consequence, free movement following Brexit is of genuine concern. Since the Brexit vote, thousands of British citizens have applied to become nationals of other EU member states so they can continue to enjoy the right to live and work across the EU.**

Given both its proximity and historical ties, the Republic of Ireland has received the most applications from UK citizens. According to official figures released by the Irish Government in December 2018, its department of foreign affairs received almost 100,000 such applications last year (an increase of 22% on the previous year). The Good Friday Agreement has helped as anyone born in Northern Ireland can choose to be a British citizen, an Irish citizen or both.

So what options exist for UK citizens who do not have an Irish connection and for citizens of other countries? The idea for this project arose over six months ago when a colleague told me that he was applying for Portuguese nationality on the basis that he is a descendant of a Sephardic Jew who fled Portugal during a state-led campaign of persecution known as the Portuguese Inquisition, which took place in the 15th century. This conversation was followed by a series of enquiries from clients looking to find out whether or not they could obtain EU nationality based on both lineage and residence.

It is fascinating to see the differences and similarities across the EU. In some countries citizenship can be obtained automatically at birth or by non-nationals by application (some on the basis of financial investment), while in others it is permitted without

residence through marriage to a national of that country or as a “token of honour” to those that have made a significant contribution to that country. Several countries will grant citizenship to those who are descendants of those who fled Communist persecution and, in a similar vein, others will grant citizenship to those who are descendants of those who fled persecution from the Nazi regime.

Despite the uniqueness of these examples, EU member states have more in common around nationality than they have differences. In every EU member state, a child born to one or more parents with citizenship of that country will acquire citizenship at birth, as will a child of unknown parentage found on the territory. Another area of commonality is the process of naturalisation, with every member state requiring a set period of residence, most requiring knowledge of the official language and most requiring demonstration of that country’s customs and culture.

This project would not have been possible had it not been for the enthusiasm of our fellow lawyers from across Europe and their willingness to provide the individual entries for their jurisdictions.

On behalf of everyone who has collaborated on this project, we hope that readers will find it informative, whether they are embarking on a journey to obtain citizenship or are interested in this as a comparative exercise.

**Jacqueline Moore**  
Head of Immigration, Shepherd and Wedderburn LLP



# AUSTRIA

📍 VIENNA ✖ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

## Austrian citizenship can be acquired:

- › automatically at birth;
- › through a successful naturalisation application; or
- › by notification or a decision on Austrian ancestry.

### AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

As a general rule, children acquire Austrian citizenship by descent if at least one parent is an Austrian citizen when the child is born. An Austrian parent who dies prior to the child's birth passes on their Austrian citizenship to the child.

Children born to non-Austrian parents cannot acquire Austrian citizenship even if born on Austrian soil. This applies irrespective of the length of the parents' previous legal residence in Austria.

### CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

#### NATURALISATION

Naturalisation, generally, requires at least 10 years' continuous legal residence in Austria. Of these, at least five years must be covered by permanent



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**D O R D A**

POPULATION  
9 million



SIZE  
84,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
German



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.2 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Sura Kees (sour  
cheese)



residence permits (that is, permits that have not been issued for purposes that are typically temporary, such as for posted workers, students or au pairs).

During the 10 years preceding regular naturalisation and the six years preceding privileged naturalisation (see below), applicants must not have been absent from Austria for any reason for more than 20% of the time.

Additional requirements include:

- the absence of criminal convictions and serious administrative penalties;
- proof of sufficient fixed and regular income to support the individual without recourse to public funds;
- passing a citizenship test;
- knowledge of German at B1 level as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages; and
- the absence of detrimental ties to foreign states.

Evaluation of financial resources is conducted through an assessment of an applicant's income during a three-year window within the six-year period prior to filing their application for naturalisation. In addition, applicants must prove they had the requisite statutory minimum income for at least six months prior to the filing date of their application for naturalisation.

Privileged naturalisation following six years of continuous legal residence is essentially available to applicants who:

- have a proven knowledge of German at B2 level within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages;
- can show sustained personal integration into Austrian society (as evidenced by employment of at least three years in the health or education sector or at least three years of voluntary work for charitable organisations); or
- have been married to Austrian citizens for at least five years.

In all of the above cases, naturalisation is conditional on the prior renunciation of whichever other citizenship(s) applicants hold. Austria does not permit dual nationality, except for those who acquire nationality on the basis of their ancestry (see below).

Austrian law also provides for the naturalisation of persons who can demonstrate extraordinary achievements in the areas of science, sports, arts

or business. In such cases, naturalisation requires the Federal Government's or the relevant Provincial Government's unanimous approval (based on a public interest in the applicant's naturalisation).

### NOTIFICATION/DECISION ON AUSTRIAN ANCESTRY

Former Austrians who fled Austria prior to prior 9 May 1945 for fear of persecution by agents of the Nazi regime can reacquire Austrian citizenship by notifying the citizenship authorities of their past persecution. In such cases, applicants do not need to adduce proof of sufficient income, nor demonstrate a knowledge of German at B1 level, nor renounce other citizenships.

Descendants of such Austrian citizens who fled Austria for fear of persecution by the Nazi regime may request that the citizenship authorities confirm their Austrian citizenship, which will be allowed even if the applicant or their ancestor acquired another nationality before 27 July 1955, when the Austrian State Treaty restored Austria as an independent state.

## → VIENNA WAITS FOR YOU

Vienna is home to almost one quarter of the entire population of Austria.



# BELGIUM

📍 BRUSSELS ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

An individual can acquire Belgian nationality by one of the following methods:

- > automatic citizenship at birth;
- > declaration; or
- > naturalisation.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child will be a Belgian citizen if they are born:

- in Belgium and have at least one Belgian parent;
- abroad and have at least one Belgian parent who was born in Belgium;
- in Belgium and have at least one foreign parent that was born in Belgium and principally resided in the country for at least 5 years during the past 10 years.

In specific circumstances, a minor that did not obtain citizenship at birth can be granted Belgian nationality without having to go through a complex procedure (e.g. when a minor is adopted by a Belgian citizen or when the minor's parent obtains Belgian nationality). Administrative action from the parents is often needed in these situations.



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POPULATION  
11 million



SIZE  
31,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
Flemish, French



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.2 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Beurre d'Ardenne  
(butter)



## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### DECLARATION OF BELGIAN NATIONALITY

This is the most common procedure for an adult to obtain Belgian nationality. If an individual meets the legal criteria, they have a right to Belgian nationality and can challenge any negative decisions in the Belgium court.

Under the declaration procedure, there are five standard criteria that an applicant must meet to be entitled to Belgian nationality.

An applicant must:

- have had their principal legal residence in Belgium for an uninterrupted period of at least five years immediately prior to the request for Belgian nationality;
- have a right to reside in Belgium for an indefinite period immediately prior to the request for Belgium nationality;
- prove their social integration (demonstrated through employment, education and/or an integration programme);
- speak one of Belgium's official languages (considered to be the case if an applicant demonstrates social integration); and
- prove their economic integration (they must have been employed for at least 468 working days in the last five years or have paid social security contributions for self-employed persons for at least six quarters in the last five years).

Certain applicants are exempt from the obligation to demonstrate some of these five standard criteria:

- applicants married to a Belgian citizen;
- applicants who are parents of a minor (i.e. under 18) that has Belgian nationality;
- applicants born in Belgium;
- foreigners unable to work due to invalidity;
- applicants that are at least 65 years old; and
- foreigners who have had their principal legal residence in Belgium for an uninterrupted period of at least ten years.

## NATURALISATION

An applicant can obtain Belgian nationality through naturalisation only in very exceptional circumstances. Belgian nationality can only be obtained through naturalisation as a courtesy by the Belgian Chamber of Representatives and is not a right to which the foreigner is entitled. Any adult with legal residence in Belgium can request naturalisation if they are a stateless foreigner or they have demonstrated extraordinary merit to Belgium (e.g. scientific, sporting or socio-cultural merit). The Belgian Chamber of Representatives has absolute discretion about whether to grant or refuse naturalisation.

## → CAPITAL OF EUROPE

Following the Treaty of Rome in 1957, which led to the creation the European Economic Community, it was agreed that Member States would take turns to chair discussions until a permanent 'capital' could be decided. Based on alphabetical order Belgium went first, but as no alternative location was chosen, Belgium continued as host.



# BULGARIA

📍 SOFIA ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP


The law governing citizenship in Bulgaria is primarily set out in the Bulgarian Citizenship Act. The Act outlines that an individual can acquire Bulgarian citizenship by one of the following methods:

- › birth;
- › descent;
- › naturalisation;
- › Bulgarian origin;
- › investments; or
- › honour.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP BY BIRTH

### BIRTH

A person may obtain Bulgarian citizenship if they are born in Bulgaria and do not automatically obtain any other citizenship through descent.



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Attorneys at Law


POPULATION

7 million



SIZE

111,000 km<sup>2</sup>




CURRENCY

Bulgarian Lev




OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Bulgarian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)

5.9 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS

File Elena  
(dried meat)



### DESCENT

Under the Bulgarian Citizenship Act, Bulgarian citizenship is automatically obtained through descent if either of an individual's parents is a Bulgarian citizen at the time of their birth. For the purposes of obtaining citizenship via descent, the place of birth of an individual is not relevant.

### CITIZENSHIP BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

A person may apply for Bulgarian citizenship five years after obtaining and holding a Bulgarian permanent or long-term residence permit. They must also meet a language requirement.

If the application for naturalisation is granted, dual citizenship is permitted only for spouses of Bulgarian citizens and citizens of a Member State of the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland. All others have to give up their current citizenship in order to obtain Bulgarian citizenship.

A shorter residence period of three years is available in certain situations to those who have obtained a Bulgarian permanent or long-term residence permit. This shorter period is available if the applicant is:

- the spouse of a Bulgarian national and has been married for at least three years; or
- an individual who became a Bulgarian permanent or long-term resident before they reached the age of 18.

### BULGARIAN ORIGIN

A person of Bulgarian origin (i.e. descendants of Bulgarian citizens) may apply for naturalisation without residing in Bulgaria or without holding a permanent or long-term residence permit.

People of Bulgarian origin are also exempt from the requirements to speak Bulgarian and to give up their current citizenship as part of the naturalisation procedure.

### INVESTMENTS

Bulgarian legislation provides different investment options for the granting of a permanent residence permit and Bulgarian citizenship. The required investment amount varies between EUR 500,000 to EUR 3,000,000. The waiting period to apply for citizenship after obtaining a permanent residence permit is one or five years, depending on the value and quantity of the investment(s) made.

Investors and their family members are exempt from the requirements to reside in Bulgaria, to speak Bulgarian and to renounce their current citizenship as part of the naturalisation procedure.

### HONOUR

A person may be granted Bulgarian citizenship if they have made a special social or economic contribution to the Bulgarian State or in the fields of science; technology; culture or sports.

There is no requirement for such an individual to reside in Bulgaria, speak Bulgarian or renounce their current citizenship.

## → OLDEST CITY IN EUROPE

One of the oldest countries in Europe, Bulgaria is home to the oldest city on the continent, Plovdiv. The remains of settlements dating back to 7,000 BC have been discovered around the city.





# CROATIA

📍 ZAGREB ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

In the Republic of Croatia, citizenship is acquired either at birth or later, based on an administrative act. Two principles govern the acquisition of citizenship: these are lineage and, exceptionally, territorial ties.


Croatian citizenship can be acquired on the grounds of:

- > origin and birth;
- > naturalisation; or
- > international treaties.


## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child acquires Croatian citizenship by origin if, at the time of their birth:

- both of their parents are Croatian citizens;
- one of their parents is a Croatian citizen and the child is born in the Republic of Croatia; or
- one of their parents is a Croatian citizen, the other parent is without citizenship or of unknown citizenship, and the child is born abroad.



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POPULATION  
4 million



SIZE  
57,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Croatian Kuna



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Croatian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.2 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Istrion prosciutto



A child of foreign citizenship or without citizenship also acquires Croatian citizenship by origin if they have been adopted by Croatian parents, pursuant to provisions of specific legislation. Such a child is considered a Croatian citizen from the moment of their birth.

The principle of territorial ties applies when a child is born or found on the territory of the Republic of Croatia and both of their parents are unknown or of unknown citizenship.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

An adult can acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalisation if they have submitted an application for Croatian citizenship and fulfil the following requirements, namely that the individual:

- is over 18 years old and has legal capacity;
- has renounced their own citizenship or submits proof that they will renounce their citizenship if granted Croatian citizenship (subject to exceptions as listed below);
- has lived and has had a registered residence in the Republic of Croatia for at least eight years continuously prior to the submission of the application and holds permanent residence;
- is proficient in the Croatian language and Latin script and is familiar with Croatian culture and social structure; and
- their behaviour suggests they respect the legal order and customs of the Republic of Croatia.

A minor (under the age of 18) acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalisation if:

- both their parents acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalisation; or
- only one of their parents acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalisation, and the child lives in the Republic of Croatia and has been granted residence; or
- only one of their parents acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalisation, while the other does not have citizenship or is of unknown citizenship, and the child lives abroad.

## DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Croatian law allows the acquisition of Croatian citizenship while upholding foreign citizenship in certain cases, namely if Croatian citizenship is acquired:

- based on marriage or life partnership with a Croatian citizen;
- by an emigrant, their descendants up to the third degree of lineal kinship and their spouses;
- by a foreigner whose acceptance Croatian citizenship would be of interest to the Republic of Croatia;
- by a minor (under the age of 18);
- by persons seeking re-admission to Croatian citizenship; or
- by a member of the Croatian people (a person holding Croatian nationality).

## → WORLD'S SMALLEST TOWN

Croatia holds the records for the world's smallest town. The small town of Hum has a modest population of between 17-23 people.

# CYPRUS

📍 NICOSIA ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

An individual can acquire Cypriot nationality by one of the following methods:

- › birth;
- › marriage;
- › naturalisation; or
- › exceptional circumstances – Cyprus Investment Programme.

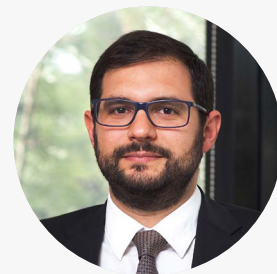
## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

An individual whose parent is/was a citizen of the Republic of Cyprus is an automatic citizen at birth, irrespective of their place of birth.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### MARRIAGE TO A CYPRIOT NATIONAL

An individual married to a Cypriot national, who has been married for three years and resided in the Republic of Cyprus for two years prior to the date of application, is eligible to acquire Cypriot citizenship by filing an application to be registered as a citizen of the Republic of Cyprus. Spouses of Cypriots living



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**Chrysostomides**  
DR. K. CHRYSOSTOMIDES & CO LLC  
ADVOCATES AND LEGAL CONSULTANTS

POPULATION  
1 million



SIZE  
9,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
Greek, Turkish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
9 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Halloumi



overseas can also be eligible for citizenship in specific instances.

### BY DESCENT

A person born on or after 16 August 1960 and who is descended from a person who was born in Cyprus between 5 November 1914 and 16 August 1960, while their parents were residing in Cyprus, is entitled, provided the said person submits an application in the appropriate form (to the Minister of Interior) and gives the official affirmation of faith to the Republic, to be registered as a citizen of the Republic.

Citizenship by descent can also be acquired by individuals by virtue of birth and their parents being based permanently in Cyprus if they are either British citizens or citizens of the Commonwealth.

An adult citizen of the United Kingdom or of the Commonwealth Countries, who has Cypriot origin (defined as someone who was born in Cyprus during the period when their parents were permanently residing in Cyprus), has the right to acquire Cypriot citizenship, as long as this person resides permanently in Cyprus for a continuous 12 month period or is employed by the public services of the Republic of Cyprus.

### NATURALISATION

An adult foreign citizen who:

- resided continuously in the Republic of Cyprus for a 12 month period before the naturalisation application; and
- was permanently residing in the Republic of Cyprus or who was employed in the public sector of the Republic of Cyprus for at least four years in the seven year period, immediately preceding the abovementioned 12 month period.

Foreign persons who reside in Cyprus exclusively for occupational purposes, as well as their family members, must reside in the Republic of Cyprus for at least a seven year period in total, of which the 12 months before the filing of the naturalisation application must be continuous.

The Council of Ministers, for reasons of public interest, has the discretion to permit the naturalisation of a foreign person without the fulfilment of certain of the usual conditions.

## CYPRUS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The Council of Ministers has the right to allow naturalisation by exception of foreign businesspeople and investors without the fulfilment of the usual conditions. Specifically, the Council of Ministers has introduced the Cyprus Investment Programme, which has been a steady growth driver for the Cyprus economy, offering non-Cypriot investors the opportunity to acquire the status of a citizen of the Republic of Cyprus through an exceptional investment procedure. This requires the fulfilment of specific criteria of a financial and personal nature. Chrysostomides possesses significant experience and expertise in relation to all aspects of the Cyprus Investment Programme, and is a registered service provider, authorised to submit applications for the Programme.

## → HISTORIC VINYARDS

Cyprus is one of the oldest wine producing countries in the world with a history spanning over 5,000 years!





# CZECHIA

📍 PRAGUE ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Czech nationality operates by law, which normally regards children as citizens (through automatic attribution at birth/adoption/being found on the territory of Czechia), or can be awarded in formal proceedings commenced by application.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child will automatically become a Czech citizen if:

- at least one of the parents is a Czech citizen on the day of the child's birth (regardless of the child's place of birth); or
- cumulatively:
  - both parents are stateless; and
  - at least one of the parents has had a lawful long-term residence in Czechia for at least 90 days; and
  - the child is born on the territory of Czechia; or
- they are under three years of age and are found on the territory of Czechia; or



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POPULATION  
11 million



SIZE  
79,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Czech Koruna



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Czech



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.6 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Zatecký chmel  
(hops)



- they are adopted, if at least one of the adoptive parents is a Czech citizen; or
- paternity is determined, in cases where only the father is a Czech citizen.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

Citizenship may (but does not have to be) awarded by the Czech Ministry of Internal Affairs upon application, if the applicant provides all the required documents and meets the following requirements, namely that they:

- are integrated into Czech society – integration in terms of family, work and social aspects are considered;
- pose no threat to the security of the state, democratic principles, life, health and property;
- have a lawful permanent residence and actual residence in Czechia for the determined time (EU residents three years; non-EU residents five years);
- have no unspent convictions (applicants who reside in Czechia for less than 10 years must prove that they have no unspent convictions in any country where they resided for longer than six months in the last 10 years) for intentional crimes (regardless of the punishment) or for negligent crimes (only sentences of imprisonment are relevant);
- have knowledge of the Czech language;
- have knowledge of the life and institutions of Czechia;
- have committed no serious breach of the obligations imposed by Czech public law within the last three years;
- have a proven source and amount of income in the last three years; and
- are not a substantial burden on the Czech social support system (not being predominantly dependent on welfare payments without serious reasons in the last three years).

In exceptional cases, citizenship may be awarded by a simplified procedure if granting citizenship to the individual would be of significant scientific, cultural, educational, sporting or humanitarian benefit to Czechia (this must be certified by the relevant authority or institution). In such a case, only the condition of no unspent convictions must be met.

The application must be filed using the designated application form and include the attachments as provided for by the Act on Citizenship of Czechia. A fee of CZK 2000 (approximately £65) applies.

Successful applicants are required to take the official Citizen's Oath of Allegiance.

## DECLARATION OF CITIZENSHIP

Declaration of citizenship is an exceptional procedure, which mostly covers persons who, during the communist era, were unlawfully deprived of citizenship, as well as their children and direct descendants, and some other exceptional cases. The facts to be proven and the documents to be provided are specified in the Act on Citizenship of Czechia. In general, the list is less comprehensive than in the case of application.

## → LARGEST CASTLE

The city of Prague boasts the largest castle in the world occupying an area more than 700 hundred square feet.






Danish citizenship can be acquired in one of the following ways:

- > birth, legitimation and adoption;
- > naturalisation; or
- > declaration for nationals of another Nordic country.

**AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH**

A child automatically becomes a Danish citizen if either of their parents is a Danish citizen (the parents do not have to be married at the time of the child’s birth). However, there is a distinction made between children born before 1 July 2014, and those born afterwards.

Children born after 1 July 2014 do not have to be born in Denmark to acquire citizenship. Children born before this date, on the other hand, need to have been born in Denmark to acquire Danish citizenship at birth if only the father is a Danish citizen, and the father is not already married to the mother. However, if the Danish father marries a foreign mother, the child does not have to be born in Denmark to acquire Danish citizenship (legitimation).



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POPULATION

6 million



SIZE

43,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY

Danish Krone




OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Danish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)

4.8 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS

Esrom (cheese),  
Danish Blue  
cheese



An adopted child under the age of 12 will become a Danish citizen at the time of their adoption if either of their adoptive parents are Danish citizens.

**CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION**

**NATURALISATION**

An individual can become a Danish citizen through naturalisation. This means that the individual will be formally included in a legal bill passed by the Danish Parliament (Folketinget). The individual must fulfil a number of requirements in order to become a Danish citizen through naturalisation.

Primarily, the individual must satisfy the residence requirements. These include having a permanent residence permit and having lived in Denmark for nine consecutive years. However, if the individual is married to a Danish citizen (who has been Danish for at least three years), the requirement of residence is only six years.

The individual must:

- sign a declaration of loyalty to Denmark and Danish society;
- have a clean criminal record as regards certain types of criminal offences;
- have no overdue debt to public authorities;
- be self-supporting;
- demonstrate their Danish language skills by passing the Danish language test;
- demonstrate knowledge of Danish culture by passing the citizenship test; and
- participate in a municipal citizenship ceremony (a new requirement is to shake hands with an official at the ceremony).

It is important to note that even if a foreign national fulfils all the listed requirements, they have no legal right to become a Danish citizen. The decision is ultimately at the discretion of the Danish Parliament.

**DECLARATION FOR NATIONALS OF ANOTHER NORDIC COUNTRY**

A citizen of another Nordic country (Finland, Iceland, Norway or Sweden) can acquire Danish citizenship by declaration if they meet a number of requirements. These are far simpler than those for Danish citizenship through naturalisation. Furthermore, a citizen of another Nordic country fulfilling these requirements has a legal right to acquire Danish citizenship (unlike foreign nationals applying for Danish citizenship through naturalisation).

**→ OLDEST FLAG**

The oldest, continuously used national flag is that of Denmark. The current design of a white Scandinavian cross on a red background was adopted in 1625 and its square shape in 1748. In Denmark it is known as the ‘Dannebrog’ or ‘Danish cloth’.

# ESTONIA

TALLINN ✕ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Estonian citizenship is based primarily on lineage.

Estonian citizenship can result from:

- › attribution by lineage to a child whose parent holds Estonian citizenship; or
- › acquisition by application (by decree of naturalisation).

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

Estonian citizenship is acquired by birth by any child:

- at least one of whose parents holds Estonian citizenship at the time of the birth of the child; or
- who is born after the death of their father who, at the time of his death, held Estonian citizenship.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

An individual can acquire Estonian citizenship by naturalisation. To apply for naturalisation, the applicant must:

- be at least 15 years of age;
- hold a long-term residence permit or a right of permanent residence;



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C O B A L T

- prior to the date on which they submit the application for Estonian citizenship, have lived in Estonia for at least eight years on the grounds of a residence permit or a right of residence, of which at least five years must have been on a permanent basis;
- have a registered place of residence in Estonia;
- be proficient in the Estonian language (at least B1 level);
- pass a test to demonstrate knowledge of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia and the Citizenship Act;
- have a permanent legal income;
- be loyal to the Estonian state; and
- take an oath.

Certain exceptions apply to persons unable to take the language proficiency exam and the exam on the Constitution and Citizenship Act for health reasons, as well as to persons whose achievements are of special merit to the Estonian state.

Children who are adopted by Estonian parents will acquire Estonian nationality automatically.

## DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Estonia does not allow dual citizenship. Estonian citizenship is lost by acquiring citizenship of another country. A child may, however, hold more than one citizenship if their parents are citizens of different countries. However, on reaching 18 years of age, a child must within three years either renounce their Estonian citizenship or that of the other country. Regardless of the above, no-one may be deprived of Estonian citizenship acquired by birth.

## → E-RESIDENCY

Since 2014, Estonia has offered non-Estonians e-Residency. The program allows access to services such as company formation, banking and taxation, and is aimed towards location-independent entrepreneurs such as software developers and writers. It's no wonder then that Estonia has more tech start-ups per capita than any other EU country.

POPULATION  
1 million



SIZE  
45,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Estonian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Vana (liquor)







# FINLAND

📍 HELSINKI ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

The law governing citizenship in Finland provides that an individual can acquire Finnish citizenship by one of the following methods:

- > birth;
- > naturalisation; or
- > declaration.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child usually receives the same citizenship as their mother, father or both. A child will automatically receive citizenship when their mother is a Finnish citizen or when their father is a Finnish citizen and married to the child's mother, regardless of the country of birth.

A child who is born to a Finnish father out of wedlock in Finland will automatically receive Finnish citizenship when paternity has been confirmed. The child can receive citizenship through a declaration proces.

A child may also be automatically Finnish at birth even if neither of the parents are Finnish citizens if the child:



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*Krogerus*

POPULATION  
6 million



SIZE  
338,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
Finnish, Swedish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.1 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Karelian Pasty,  
Sahti (beer)



- is born in Finland;
- does not obtain citizenship of any other country on the basis of the parents' citizenship; and
- does not have a secondary right to citizenship of another country.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

An individual can submit an application for citizenship to the Finnish Immigration Service if they fulfil certain conditions, including:

- a continuous period of residence for the past five years or an accumulated period of residence of seven years (including two years without interruption);
- achieving satisfactory Finnish language skills;
- meeting integrity requirements (no criminal offences and no restraining orders); and
- providing a reliable account of livelihood.

As a general rule, all the requirements must be met when submitting the application. Exceptions can be made to the general requirements if the applicant:

- has previously had Finnish citizenship;
- is married to a Finnish citizen; or
- other special circumstances apply.

For example, naturalisation can be achieved if, amongst other requirements, the spouse of the applicant is a Finnish citizen and the applicant has lived in Finland for the past four years without interruption; or an accumulated period of six years (after the age of 15) with the last two years without interruption.

Normal holiday trips abroad are allowed during an applicant's uninterrupted residence in Finland. Therefore, the continuous period of residence will not be interrupted by spending three weeks or a month abroad. However, living abroad repeatedly or for long periods of time after taking up residence in Finland can be considered an interruption to the continuity of the residence.

## DECLARATION

Finnish citizenship can also be obtained by declaration by certain groups of people. The declaration procedure is a faster and less expensive way of becoming a citizen compared to obtaining citizenship through the application process.

Provided that specific requirements are met, the procedure is possible for:

- former Finnish citizens;
- children whose guardian is a Finnish citizen;
- Nordic citizens; and
- certain young applicants who have lived in Finland long enough.

The Finnish Nationality Act regulates the declaration procedure in a very detailed manner and, as such, all the categories are subject to further requirements.

## → HAPPIEST COUNTRY

According to the 2019 Happiness Report, Finland is the happiest country in the world, followed by Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and the Netherlands.

# FRANCE

PARIS ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Unlike other European countries whose nationality laws rely on lineage (jus sanguinis), France has maintained nationality rights based on a mixture of territorial (jus soli) and lineage ties.

Consequently, French nationality can result from:

- attribution by lineage or by birth in France to at least one parent who was born in France; or
- acquisition by right (for example, birth and residence in France, under some conditions), by declaration (for example, marriage to a French spouse) or by decree of naturalisation.

The attribution of French nationality by lineage may be interrupted and subsequently lost when a French national is absent from France for a protracted period and does not maintain ties with the country.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child will be a French citizen if they:

- have at least one French parent;



Andreea Haulbert

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**Karl Waheed**  
avocats  
mobilité internationale du travail

POPULATION  
67 million



SIZE  
644,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
French



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.5 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Brie, Champagne



- were born in France with at least one foreign parent who was born in France; or
- were born in France before January 1994 and have at least one parent born in a former overseas French territory (before its independence).

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### BIRTH AND RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

A child born in France with foreign parents may obtain French nationality. Depending on the child's age, the conditions to be met and the procedure are different, but residence in France is mandatory in all cases.

### DECREE OF NATURALISATION

The main requirements to naturalise are:

- lawful residence – no one can acquire French citizenship if they are residing illegally in France;
- duration of the stay (condition de stage) – an applicant must have resided in France for a minimum period of five years prior to submitting their application (unless an exemption applies; which can reduce the residence requirement to two years);
- domicile of citizenship (domicile de nationalité) – the applicant must have a permanent residence in France. Case-law has established that this means that an applicant must have family and personal ties in France in addition to having their financial assets based in France; and
- good character and integration into the French community – there is a 'good character' assessment. An applicant can be refused if they have a criminal conviction. An applicant must also pass a French language exam, and have a basic understanding of French history, culture and society.

### DECLARATION OF CITIZENSHIP ON THE BASIS OF MARRIAGE TO A FRENCH NATIONAL

Under the 'Loi Sarkozy', a foreigner living in France who has been married to a French citizen for four years can acquire French citizenship by declaration, as long as the couple has resided in France continuously for three years.

If the married couple live outside France and the French spouse has not been registered for at least four years on the French consular registers, a five-year waiting period is required before the declaration can be made.

In addition to the many documents required to prove both the applicant's identity and nationality and the spouse's French nationality, the spouse must speak, read, and write at least basic French. They need to make a "déclaration de nationalité" and go to the Consulate for an interview.

## → IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY

Over half the world's roundabouts (30,000) are in France.





The acquisition of German citizenship is regulated by the Nationality Act, which covers the following routes to citizenship:


- › birth;
- › adoption; and
- › naturalisation.

**AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH**

German citizenship can be acquired by birth if either one of the parents is a German citizen or, under certain conditions, by being born on German soil.

Automatic acquisition of German citizenship varies depending upon the parent’s citizenship status:


- German mother: if the mother is German, the child is automatically German at birth, regardless of where they were born.
- German father: if only the father is German, the paternity of the child must be legally recognised before the child’s 24th birthday. If the father was born abroad after 31 December 1999 and has habitual residence abroad, the child will not become an automatic German citizen at birth.




Regina Glaser

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POPULATION  
83 million




SIZE  
357,000 km<sup>2</sup>




CURRENCY  
Euro




OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
German



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.6 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Kölsch beer,  
Black forest ham



A child can acquire German citizenship if they are stateless or if the parents register the child within a year in Germany.

To acquire citizenship at birth without one of the parents being a German citizen, the child must:

- be born in Germany; and
- have one parent who has lawfully resided in Germany for eight years; and is
- in possession of a valid permanent residence permit.

**ADOPTION**

Finally, German citizenship can be acquired by adoption as long as the child is under the age of 18 at the date of application. The child will automatically acquire citizenship upon confirmation of the adoption.

**CITIZENSHIP BY APPLICATION**

**NATURALISATION**

The Naturalisation Authority must grant a naturalisation application if one of the two following scenarios applies:

- the applicant is a former German citizen, who between 30 January 1933 and 8 May 1945 was deprived of their citizenship on political, racial or religious grounds, or is a descendant of such a former German citizen; or
- the applicant has:
  - an unrestricted right of residence;
  - passed the naturalisation test;
  - had their habitual and lawful place of residence in Germany for eight years;
  - independent means of securing a living;
  - adequate German-language skills;
  - a clean criminal record; and
  - committed to the free democratic constitutional order of Germany.

Beneficial treatment also exists for spouses of German citizens. The Naturalisation Authority will (in the absence of valid grounds for refusal) comply with the naturalisation application if the applicant:

- is the spouse or life partner of a German citizen;
- is a lawful and permanent resident in the country;

- has a clean criminal record;
- has permanent accommodation and is able to support themselves;
- renounces their previous citizenship (some exceptions to this rule exist),
- conforms to the German way of life; and
- has sufficient command of the German language (i.e. Level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This is the same language requirement as for other applicants).

If all the above criteria cannot be satisfied, then the Naturalisation Authority has a discretion to grant naturalisation in the following limited circumstances:

- The applicant is legally and ordinarily resident in Germany, has a clean criminal record, with both accommodation and the means to support themselves.
- An applicant who is a former German and their minor children may be naturalised if they have no criminal record.
- A foreigner may be naturalised if ties with Germany exist which may justify a naturalisation. In such a case they must fulfil other obligatory criteria including having no criminal record, appropriate accommodation and the financial ability to support themselves.

**DUAL NATIONALITY**

Germany allows dual nationality with members of other EU states and Switzerland. In the event of Brexit, people having both nationalities will not have to choose between the two. If the British/ German nationality was acquired before Brexit, the citizen will not need permission to keep their German nationality. The need for such permission depends only on the date of the naturalisation. This, however, will not apply for British applicants after the Brexit.

→ **\$4 TRILLION**

Germany has the largest GDP within the EU – \$4 trillion.

# GREECE

ATHENS ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Greek citizenship is governed by the Greek Nationality Code, which provides as follows:

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

### BIRTH IN GREECE

A child acquires Greek citizenship automatically by birth, if:

- either of their parents is a Greek citizen;
- either of their parents was born and has had permanent residence in Greece since birth;
- they did not acquire a foreign citizenship by birth or cannot acquire such citizenship by declaration of their parents before the competent foreign authorities; or
- they are of unknown citizenship, as long as failure to identify any other foreign citizenship is not attributed to a parent's refusal to co-operate.

Special provisions are in force for individuals born before 8 May 1984 to a Greek mother who had Greek citizenship during labour or on the date of the marriage from which the child was born, and they will be entitled to become Greek citizens. The same applies to persons born to a Greek father and a foreign mother before 16 July 1982, if the child's parentage is confirmed.



Terina Raptis

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POPULATION  
11 million



SIZE  
132,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Greek



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
7.8 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Feta Cheese



## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

The main requirements for adults to naturalise are:

- Lawful residence – seven years' continuous residence is required. In addition, good character and integration into the Greek community is required – an applicant has to demonstrate they have integrated into the social, economic and political life after successful interview. A successful naturalisation application is published in the Greek Government Gazette.
- Greek Association – a person born in Greece to foreign nationals can acquire Greek citizenship if they attend a Greek school from the first grade of primary school and either parent has legally resided in Greece for at least five consecutive years before their birth. If the person is born before the completion of the five year legal residence of the parent, then the right to Greek citizenship is acquired after the parent has legally resided in Greece for 10 years.

Foreign minors can also acquire Greek citizenship if they reside legally and permanently in Greece and have successfully attended a Greek school either for nine grades of primary and secondary education or for six grades of secondary education.

A person who resides legally and permanently in Greece can also acquire Greek citizenship if they are a graduate of a Greek university or technical education institute and hold a school-leaving certificate from a Greek school of secondary education.

## LEGITIMATION OF CHILD

A foreign national who is born outside marriage and is legally recognised by a Greek citizen becomes a Greek citizen upon recognition, as long as recognition takes place while they are still a minor.

## TOKEN OF HONOUR

The President of Greece may issue a Presidential Decree granting citizenship as a token of honour to a person who has rendered distinguished services to the Greek nation or whose naturalisation is of exceptional national interest.

## → COMPULSORY VOTE

Greeks aged 17 and above are legally required to vote. It is said to encourage patriotism at an early age, as the young generation are the future of Greece.





# HUNGARY

📍 BUDAPEST ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Hungarian citizenship is acquired automatically at birth, through naturalisation or declaration.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

The child of a Hungarian citizen will obtain Hungarian citizenship automatically at birth, even if the child is born outside Hungary.

The following individuals will also be recognised as Hungarian citizens at birth:

- children born in Hungary to stateless persons residing in Hungary; and
- children born to unknown parents and found in Hungary.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

A non-Hungarian citizen may be naturalised upon request if the applicant:

1. has been domiciled in Hungary for a continuous period of eight years prior to the submission of the application;
2. has a clean criminal record and has not been indicted in any criminal proceedings before a Hungarian court;



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**SZECSKAY**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

3. has sufficient means of subsistence and a place of residence in Hungary;
4. is not considered to be a threat to public policy or to the national security of Hungary; and
5. provides evidence they have passed an examination in basic constitutional studies in the Hungarian language, or proof that they are exempted by virtue of the Act on Citizenship.

However, in the case of certain groups of applicants, the law sets out less strict conditions in relation to the eight year continuous residence period.

For spouses of a Hungarian, a simpler naturalisation procedure may be available.

There is also the option of a simplified naturalisation procedure, where you do not have to settle in Hungary to acquire Hungarian citizenship, you do not have to take a citizenship exam and you do not have to prove your domicile or that you live in Hungary. Instead, you only need to know the Hungarian language.

A non-Hungarian citizen who has been married to a Hungarian citizen for at least ten years, or has been married for five years and has a child with the Hungarian citizen, may apply for preferential naturalisation, provided they meet the conditions specified in naturalisation conditions 2. and 4. above, and can certify their Hungarian language proficiency.

## DECLARATION

Hungarian citizenship may be acquired or reacquired by declaration in respect of individuals who have lost Hungarian citizenship in the following circumstances:

- they were deprived of their Hungarian citizenship by virtue of certain acts;
- their Hungarian citizenship ceased between 15 September 1947 and 2 May 1990 by expatriation; or
- they were obligatorily resettled in Germany.

An individual born to a Hungarian mother and a foreign father before 1 October 1957, who did not become a Hungarian citizen by birth by virtue of the legal rules in effect at the time, may acquire Hungarian citizenship regardless of their place of residence.

Any stateless person may acquire Hungarian citizenship by declaration if they were born in Hungary to foreign citizen parents living in Hungary, and they have not acquired the foreign citizenship of their parents by birth, provided that at their date of birth the parents had a residence in Hungary.

## → HIGHEST VAT RATE

The rate of VAT in Hungary is the highest in the world – 27%.

POPULATION  
10 million



SIZE  
93,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Hungarian Forint



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Hungarian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.4 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Szentesi paprika



# IRELAND

📍 DUBLIN ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

The law governing citizenship in Ireland is primarily set out in the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Acts 1956 to 2004 (the Acts). Under these Acts, an individual can acquire Irish Citizenship by one of the following methods:

- › birth
- › naturalisation
- › descent; or
- › token honour

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

Individuals are entitled to automatic citizenship if they were born in Ireland on or before 31 December 2004. If an individual was born on or after 1 January 2005, they are entitled to Irish citizenship if one or both of their parents is:

- Irish;
- a foreign national legally resident in the State for three out of four years immediately prior to their birth;
- has been granted refugee status in Ireland; or



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POPULATION  
5 million



SIZE  
70,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
English, Irish  
Gaelic



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.0 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Irish Whiskey,  
Clare Island  
Salmon



- is British or is entitled to live in Northern Ireland or the Irish State without restriction on their residency.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

A person who fulfils certain conditions, including residing in the State for at least five years, with one year's continuous residence immediately preceding the date of their application, may apply to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform for a certificate of naturalisation. The Minister has absolute discretion whether or not to grant naturalisation, even where the applicant meets the conditions set out in the Acts. An increasingly strict approach is being taken to reckonable residency in the State and absences of more than six weeks from the State in any year for any reason may deem an applicant ineligible for naturalisation.

Naturalisation may also be achieved if, amongst other requirements, an individual is married to an Irish citizen for a period of not less than three years and has resided within the State for a period of at least two out of the previous four years immediately preceding the date of their application.

### DESCENT AND IRISH ASSOCIATION

Irish citizenship can be obtained through descent if either of that individual's parents was an Irish citizen at the time of their birth. For the purposes of obtaining citizenship via descent, the place of birth of the individual is deemed irrelevant.

Citizenship can also be obtained through Irish Association, which refers to being "related by blood, affinity, adoption to, or is the civil partner of a person who is/was an Irish citizen". If a person satisfies these conditions and is deemed eligible, they can apply to register the birth on the Foreign Births Register.

## TOKEN OF HONOUR

The President of Ireland may grant citizenship as a token of honour to a person or to the child or grandchild of a person who, in the opinion of the Government, has rendered distinguished services to the Irish nation. Obtaining citizenship through this method is rare and is generally confined to unique honorary or ceremonial awards.

## → IRISH DESCENT

More than 80 million people of Irish descent live outside Ireland. That number is 14 times Ireland's population.



# ITALY

📍 ROME ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH (REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT)

A direct descendant (child, grandchild, great-grandchild etc.) of an Italian citizen is Italian by operation of law and entitled to be registered as a citizen in an Italian public register regardless of the nationality of the other parent or the country where they were born.

Registration is normally filed by the parents immediately upon birth, but this is not always carried out (e.g. in the case of descendants of an Italian family that moved to another country decades previously).

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION ON THE BASIS OF MARRIAGE

A non-Italian married to an Italian can apply for Italian citizenship, provided:

- the applicant has been a resident of Italy for one year if the couple gave birth to or adopted a child, or, failing a child, for two years; or
- the couple has been married for 18 months and has a child, or 36 months if the couple has no children.



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### NATURALISATION ON THE BASIS OF RESIDENCE

Citizenship can also be applied for based on residence, known as the Residence Length Requirement (RLR); this can vary depending on certain circumstances as set out below:

- The RLR is four years for applicants who are citizens of an EU member state, and ten years for those who are not.
- An individual who was born and has been residing in Italy since birth can apply upon reaching the age of 19.
- If the applicant is an unregistered direct descendant of an Italian citizen not born in Italy and older than 18, the RLR is two years (to be met before reaching the age of 18). However, if they were born in Italy the RLR is three years and no minimum age is required.
- The RLR is five years for an applicant who is any of the following: an adopted person of legal age, provided one of the adopting parents is Italian; a stateless person; a political refugee; or the child of legal age of naturalised Italian parents.

The RLR is also five years if the applicant has been employed by a political subdivision of the Italian government in any country.

### LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Applicants for naturalisation must possess proper knowledge of the Italian language (at least level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

## → UNESCO WONDERLAND

Italy has the world's most UNESCO heritage sites – 53, thanks to its Roman history and spectacular landscapes.

POPULATION  
61 million



SIZE  
301,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Italian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
6.8 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Buffalo Mozzarella,  
Prosciutto di  
Parma, Gorgonzola





# LATVIA

📍 RIGA ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Obtaining Latvian citizenship is governed by the Citizenship Act and the Cabinet Regulations issued in accordance with it. The public authority responsible for citizenship affairs is the Office of Citizenship and Migrations Affairs (OCMA).

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

Automatic citizenship at birth is granted to an individual born in Latvia:


- whose parents are both Latvian citizens; or
- with one parent who is a Latvian citizen (if restrictions on dual citizenship do not apply).

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

A foreign national over age 15 can obtain Latvian citizenship through a naturalisation procedure. To be eligible the individual must:


- have permanently resided in Latvia for at least the last five years;



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- pass a test on their knowledge of the Latvian language, constitution and national anthem, and the basics of the history and culture of Latvia;
- have a legal source of income;
- have no statutory reason for refusal (e.g. former employees, informants or agents of USSR State Security Committee, criminal records in Latvia or other countries, etc.); and
- renounce their current citizenship, unless they are citizens of EU, EFTA or NATO countries, Australia, Brazil or New Zealand, all of whom can hold dual citizenship.

The OCMA reviews naturalisation applications, verifies that the above criteria are met, requests detailed information from other public authorities and organises the test. If no issues arise, a decision to grant citizenship is adopted during a 12-month timescale after all the formalities are settled by the Cabinet of Ministers, based on a draft decree of the OCMA. After the decree is adopted, the citizen makes an oath at a formal ceremony organised by the OCMA.

### REGISTRATION

Apart from naturalisation, there are additional groups of people who can receive Latvian citizenship by submitting documentary evidence that they belong to one of the following groups:

### EXILES

Latvian exiles are those who were citizens of Latvia as at 17 June 1940 and who fled Soviet or German occupation of Latvia or were deported between 17 June 1940 and 4 May 1990 and could not return to Latvia.

The citizenship is registered by the OCMA, and a decision made within four months. It is possible to request a notice proving citizenship as at 17 June 1940 from the State Historical Archives or Civil Registry Department in Latvia. Dual citizenship is permitted without any limitations.

### DESCENDANTS OF LATVIANS AND LATVIAN EXILES

Any person born to Latvian parents, regardless of their place of birth or permanent place of residence, can be registered as a Latvian citizen.

Citizenship is registered within one month after the application is submitted to the OCMA with documents confirming the Latvian citizenship of the parent(s). Rules for holding dual citizenship do not apply to the descendants of Latvian exiles.

### LATVIANS AND LIVS

Latvians and Livs are those:

- with an ancestor who lived in the territory of Latvia in 1881 and more recently;
- who belong to the constituent nation (Latvian) or autochthon population (Livs); and
- who are fluent in Latvian.

Latvians and Livs can retain their effective citizenship when they apply for Latvian citizenship. The application is reviewed by the OCMA in a one year timescale.

### DESCENDANTS OF LATVIAN NON-CITIZENS

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, not all people residing in Latvia received Latvian citizenship. At present there are approximately 220,000 non-citizens residing in Latvia, holding varying passports and statuses. The status of 'non-citizen' was created as a transitional status for all people who stayed in Latvia following the collapse of the Soviet Union, to provide opportunity to naturalise and acquire Latvian citizenship.


Newborns of non-citizens do not automatically acquire Latvian citizenship at birth. Non-citizen parents can request to register their child as a Latvian citizen simultaneously with registering the fact of birth. Between 15-18 years of age, the descendant can single-handedly apply for Latvian citizenship. The applications are reviewed by the OCMA in 1 month.

At the end of March 2019, a draft law was submitted, which provides for the granting of automatic citizenship to all descendants of Latvian non-citizens after 1 January 2020. The draft law was passed in the first reading on 9 May 2019, but there are a further two readings ahead.


## → JEAN CREATOR

A Latvian tailor, Jākobs Jufess, invented blue jeans in 1870 with backing from Levi Strauss.


POPULATION  
2 million



SIZE  
65,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Latvian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.8 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Rucava white  
butter, Jani  
cheese





# LITHUANIA

📍 VILNIUS ✖ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

The following individuals are Lithuanian citizens at birth:

- a child born anywhere with at least one parent who is a Lithuanian citizen, whether or not the Lithuanian parent is alive at the time of birth;
- a child of stateless persons (or of a stateless mother if the father is unknown) who are legally permanently residing in Lithuania, irrespective of whether the child was born in or outside the territory of Lithuania, provided the child has not acquired citizenship of another state by birth;
- a child found or residing in the territory of Lithuania, of unknown parentage, unless it transpires that a child has acquired citizenship of another state; or
- a child adopted by a Lithuanian citizen.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### AN APPLICATION FOR CITIZENSHIP CAN BE MADE:

- under a simplified procedure by those who are of Lithuanian descent;
- through naturalisation;
- through exception based on outstanding contribution to Lithuania; or
- re-instatement.



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**Ellex<sup>®</sup>**  
**Valiunas**

POPULATION  
3 million



SIZE  
65,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Lithuanian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.4 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Skilandis  
(sausage)



## SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURE

Persons of Lithuanian descent who have never held Lithuanian citizenship are entitled to acquire citizenship under the simplified procedure, irrespective of whether they are permanently residing in Lithuania or in any other state.

A “person of Lithuanian descent” must confirm that they consider themselves Lithuanian and have at least one parent or grandparent who is or was Lithuanian.

## NATURALISATION

A person who fulfils certain conditions, including 10 years’ lawful residence in Lithuania, passing a state language test and a test on the fundamentals of the Constitution of Lithuania, may apply to the President of Lithuania for citizenship through naturalisation. An applicant must take an oath of allegiance after the naturalisation decree is issued.

A spouse of a Lithuanian citizen can naturalise after a shortened period of residence, namely seven years living in Lithuania with their spouse. The other requirements for naturalisation remain as above.

Lithuania does not permit dual nationality, so in both cases applicants must renounce their existing nationality as part of the application process.

## EXCEPTION

Lithuanian citizenship may be granted to foreign nationals by way of exception based on their outstanding (extraordinary) contribution to the State of Lithuania, provided they have integrated into Lithuanian society.

## RE-INSTATEMENT

Persons who held Lithuanian citizenship prior to 15 June 1940 and their descendants (up to third generation), who had not acquired Lithuanian citizenship before 1 April 2011, have an indefinite right to reinstate Lithuanian citizenship, irrespective of whether they are permanently residing in Lithuania.

This statutory ground for acquisition of Lithuanian citizenship is actively used by expatriates because they are entitled to dual citizenship, provided it is proved that they are a person (or a descendant of a person) who left Lithuania prior to 11 March 1990.

## DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Generally, Lithuania does not allow for dual citizenship. Dual citizenship in Lithuania is possible only where:

- the person was deported from occupied Lithuania before 11 March 1990 or is a descendant (up to third generation) of a person so deported;
- the person left Lithuania before 11 March 1990 or is a descendant (up to third generation) of such a person;
- a child has acquired dual citizenship by birth;
- the person has acquired the citizenship of foreign state automatically after the marriage with the foreign national;
- the person has been adopted by a citizen / citizen of the Republic of Lithuania until they have reached the age of 18 and have therefore acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania;
- the person being a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania until age 18 years old has been adopted by citizen / citizen of a foreign state and has therefore acquired the citizenship of foreign state;
- the person has acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania by way of exception as a citizen of foreign state;
- the person has retained the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania or has had their Lithuanian citizenship returned because they made an outstanding (extraordinary) contribution to the State of Lithuania;
- the person has acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania with refugee status.

## → NATIONAL SPORT

Basketball is the national sport of Lithuania. The men’s team is ranked third in the world behind the USA and Spain.

# LUXEMBOURG

LUXEMBOURG CITY ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

- › by birth (being born to at least one Luxembourgish parent); or
- › by virtue of adoption.

## CITIZENSHIP BY APPLICATION

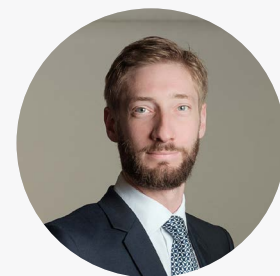
An applicant can obtain Luxembourgish nationality by option or by naturalisation.

Before acquiring Luxembourgish nationality through one of these two procedures, an applicant must:

- satisfy a Luxembourgish language requirement as evidenced by a Luxembourgish language test pass certificate or a certificate confirming participation in a Luxembourgish language course; and
- pass a test and obtain a "Vivre ensemble au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg" certificate that demonstrates knowledge of the fundamental rights of citizens, the state and local institutions of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, as well as the history of Luxembourg and European integration.

## LUXEMBOURGISH NATIONALITY BY OPTION

A person may acquire Luxembourgish nationality by option.



Philippe Schmit

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The following categories of persons can apply under the option procedure:

- adults with a parent, adoptive parent or grandparent who is or was Luxembourgish;
- parents of a Luxembourgish minor;
- spouses of a Luxembourgish national;
- persons born in Luxembourg who are over the age of 12 at the time of application;
- adults who completed seven years of schooling in Luxembourg;
- adults who have lawfully resided in Luxembourg for a minimum of 20 years;
- adults who have fulfilled the obligations arising from the Welcome and Integration Contract (Contrat d'accueil et d'intégration);
- adults who settled in Luxembourg before the age of 18; or
- adults with stateless person, refugee or subsidiary protection status.

## LUXEMBOURGISH NATIONALITY BY NATURALISATION

A person may acquire Luxembourgish nationality by naturalisation.

A person must have lawfully resided in Luxembourg for at least five years. The final year of residence immediately preceding the naturalisation application must have been uninterrupted.

## → FOUNDING MEMBER

Luxembourg was one of the original members of what came to be known as the European Communities, along with Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and West Germany.

POPULATION  
0.6 million



SIZE  
3,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
French, German,  
Luxembourgish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.5 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Beurre Rose







# MALTA

VALLETTA DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship law in Malta is regulated under the Maltese Citizenship Act. It is mainly based on the principle of citizenship by bloodline (i.e. a child being born to Maltese parents), and can also be acquired in other ways including naturalisation, marriage and investment.

### AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

### CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

#### NATURALISATION

An individual has to prove they resided in Malta for periods amounting, in aggregate, to a minimum of four years, during the six years preceding the 12 month period prior to their application. Citizenship may also be acquired after a minimum of five years of marriage to a Maltese citizen. In both cases, the acquisition of citizenship depends on the approval of the Minister responsible for citizenship.




Dr Jean-Philippe  
Chetcuti

Senior Partner,  
Chetcuti Cauchi


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 CHETCUTI CAUCHI


POPULATION  
0.5 million




SIZE  
316 km<sup>2</sup>




CURRENCY  
Euro




OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
Maltese, English



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
8.4 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Gbejna (sheep's cheese)



### THE MALTA INDIVIDUAL INVESTOR PROGRAMME (MIIP)

As of 2013, Maltese citizenship may also be granted by investment.

The MIIP is a citizenship by investment programme that offers a unique combination of benefits to investors due to its membership of the EU, participation in the Schengen Area and membership of the Commonwealth of Nations. It is also one of the few countries to offer visa-free travel to the US.

The MIIP offers applicants:

- family applications for spouses, children under 18, adult dependants, and economically dependent grandparents, aged over 55;
- the rights, as applicable by law, of any Maltese citizen;
- the ability to reside, work and study in Malta and in other EU countries;
- travel access across the Schengen Area;
- visa-free travel to over 168 countries;
- a processing time of just 12 months; and
- a residence permit within two weeks during the application process.

#### CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible for Maltese citizenship, the applicant must be over 18 and pass a strict four-tier due diligence test to determine whether they are of good standing. Approval is not granted if any of the requirements are not reached, and citizenship can be withdrawn once granted if the applicant breaches any programme requirement.

If the due diligence test is passed, the investor is required to make a non-refundable contribution and investment in property and bonds/shares. Additionally, the applicant must show proof of genuine ties to Malta and be covered by health insurance.

#### DUE DILIGENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE APPLICANT

The applicant must:

- have a clean criminal record from their country of citizenship and any country in which they have resided for six months or more during the last 10 years;

- never have been refused entry into Malta or to any of the countries to which Malta provides visa-free access; and
- not be under investigation for, or guilty of, criminal offences.

#### CONTRIBUTION AND INVESTMENTS

The main applicant must make:

- a non-refundable contribution of €650,000;
- a non-refundable contribution of €25,000 each for spouses and dependent minor children;
- a non-refundable contribution of €50,000 for each additional adult dependent;
- a minimum qualifying investment in bonds or shares of €150,000 held for at least five years; and
- a qualifying property purchase worth a minimum of €350,000 held for at least five years or rent a property at a minimum cost of €16,000 a year for the first five years.

Since the launch of the MIIP, Malta has seen numerous HNWI MIIP applicants looking for a stable jurisdiction to start a family or a business. In return, the island has offered them increased mobility, healthcare and educational opportunities across the EU.

### → ISLAND OF SUNSHINE

Malta ranks number one within the EU for hours of sunshine. It is also the smallest country by both population and land mass.





# NETHERLANDS

📍 AMSTERDAM 🌐 DUAL CITIZENSHIP

There are three ways to obtain Dutch nationality:

- › by birth;
- › by naturalisation; or
- › by option.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

For naturalisation you must:

- have had your main residency in the Netherlands for a minimum of five consecutive years based on a valid residence permit;
- be 18 years old, prove your identity with a birth certificate and prove your nationality through a valid passport;
- have passed four Dutch language exams (i.e. reading, writing, speaking and listening at A2 level);
- have passed the Knowledge of Dutch Society and Orientation on the Dutch Labor Market test resulting in a civic integration diploma;



Hermie de Voer

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**everaert advocaten**  
IMMIGRATION LAWYERS

POPULATION  
17 million



SIZE  
43,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES  
Dutch, Frisian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.6 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Gouda, Edam



- not have had any criminal convictions in the five years immediately preceding your naturalisation request; and
- have done your utmost to renounce your other nationality/nationalities.

### BENEFICIAL TREATMENT FOR PARTNERS

Spouses and registered partners of Dutch citizens can apply for naturalisation after three years' residency. Spouses and registered partners of Dutch citizens can also apply for naturalisation from abroad if they live in a country other than the country of their original nationality.

### OPTION PROCEDURE

The option procedure to obtain Dutch nationality applies to those who have a strong connection to the Netherlands and therefore are deemed to be sufficiently integrated.

This includes:

- former Dutch citizens, living in the Netherlands for at least one year with a valid residence permit for a non-temporary goal;
- adults who are lawfully residing in the Netherlands, who have lived there from the age of four or who were born in the Netherlands;
- spouses of Dutch citizens who have been married for more than three years and who have lawfully resided in the Netherlands for more than 15 years;
- anyone who lived in the Netherlands legally for 15 years and is over 65; and
- children born before 1985 to a Dutch mother and a foreign father, so-called 'latent Dutch citizens'.

The option procedure is faster and less expensive than the naturalisation procedure. A civic integration exam is not required. In most option procedures, there is no renunciation requirement.

### DUAL CITIZENSHIP

The Dutch Government aims to limit dual nationality as much as possible. For this reason, applicants must renounce other nationalities when becoming a Dutch citizen. However, there are several exceptions to this general rule. Some are explicit; others are more obscure and depend on the individual's particular circumstances.

The main explicit ones are:

- you are married to, or have a registered partnership with, a Dutch national;
- you are born in the Netherlands and live in the Netherlands when you apply for naturalisation;
- you are under 18 and are applying to naturalise or for the option procedure at the same time as your parents;
- you have a residence permit for asylum;
- the country of your current nationality does not allow you to renounce it; or
- renunciation is not possible due to special and objectively verifiable reasons.

## → FRISIAN LANGUAGES

The Frisian languages are a closely related group of Germanic languages, spoken by about 500,000 Frisian people, who live on the southern fringes of the North Sea in the Netherlands and Germany.





# POLAND

WARSAW DUAL CITIZENSHIP

In Poland, citizenship can be acquired through:

- > birth; or
- > naturalisation (in one of the two below forms):
  - > a discretionary grant of citizenship made by the President of Poland; or
  - > recognition as a Polish citizen

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

Generally, children acquire Polish citizenship if at least one parent is Polish, no matter where they were born.

If someone born to a Polish parent does not have any documents confirming their Polish citizenship, they may apply for confirmation of Polish citizenship.

## CITIZENSHIP BY APPLICATION

### GRANTING POLISH CITIZENSHIP

The President of Poland may grant Polish citizenship at the request of a foreign citizen. The President's decision to grant Polish citizenship is discretionary, which means that the President may grant Polish citizenship to



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WAR  
DYN  
SKI+ PAR  
TNE  
RS.

any foreign citizen irrespective of whether the statutory provisions regarding Polish citizenship have been met.

## RECOGNITION AS A POLISH CITIZEN

The following may be recognised as a Polish citizen:

- a foreign citizen who has resided in Poland for at least three years under a permanent residence permit or a long-term EU residence permit and possesses a stable and regular source of income and legal title to a dwelling (e.g. rental agreement);
- a foreign citizen who has resided in Poland for at least two years under a permanent residence permit or a long-term EU residence permit and who has been married to a Polish citizen for at least three years or does not hold any citizenship; or
- a foreign citizen who has resided in Poland legally for at least ten years (no matter the basis of their stay) and possesses a stable and regular source of income and legal title to a dwelling.

The applicant should attach a certificate of knowledge of Polish, and the application is submitted to the relevant provincial authority (Voivode or wojewoda).

## RESUMPTION OF POLISH CITIZENSHIP

A foreign citizen who held Polish citizenship but lost it before 1 January 1999 may apply to have their Polish citizenship reinstated.

## → BIG MAC, SMALL PRICE

Poland is the 8th cheapest country in the world to buy a Big Mac at only \$2.30. Switzerland is the most expensive costing \$6.35.

POPULATION  
38 million



SIZE  
313,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Polish złoty



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Polish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.3 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Kielbasa lisiecka  
(sausage), Oscypek  
(smoked cheese)





# PORTUGAL

📍 LISBON 🗳️ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Portuguese nationality can be either obtained by birth or by adoption, marriage or naturalisation.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

The following individuals will acquire Portuguese citizenship automatically at birth:

- children of a Portuguese mother or Portuguese father, born in a Portuguese territory: mainland, Madeira and the Azores (Autonomous Regions);
- children of a Portuguese mother or Portuguese father, born in foreign countries, if the parent was rendering services to the Portuguese state at the time of birth;
- children of a Portuguese mother or Portuguese father, born in foreign countries if the birth is duly registered with the Portuguese Civil Registry Office or if they declare their wish to be Portuguese citizens;
- children born in foreign countries with at least one grandparent with current Portuguese nationality who declare they want to be Portuguese, possess an effective link to the national community and, if the previous criteria are met, whose birth was registered with the Portuguese Civil Registry Office;



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**PLMJ** Transformative  
Legal  
Experts

POPULATION  
10 million



SIZE  
92,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Portuguese



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
7.7 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Fogaca de feira  
(sweet bread) ,  
presunto (ham)



- children born in a Portuguese territory to foreign national parents, if at least one of the parents was born in Portugal and resided in the country, independent of the legal document held by the parents at the time of the birth;
- children born in a Portuguese territory to parents with foreign citizenships, who are not rendering services to the country of birth and who have not declared they do not want to be Portuguese, as long as, at the time of birth, one of the parents has been legally residing in Portugal for at least two years; or
- children born in a Portuguese territory who do not possess any other nationality.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

Portuguese nationality may be acquired in the following ways:

### MARRIAGE

By marriage or civil partnership with a Portuguese citizen for at least three years. The foreign citizen must declare their intention to become a Portuguese citizen during wedlock. Residence in Portugal is not a legal requirement in this case.

### ADOPTION

Through adoption by Portuguese parents.

### NATURALISATION

- foreign citizens who legally reside in Portugal for at least five years and hold sufficient knowledge of Portuguese language;
- children of foreign citizens, younger than 18 years old, born in a Portuguese territory, who hold sufficient knowledge of Portuguese language and comply with one of the following criteria:
  - one of the parents has resided in a Portuguese territory for a minimum period of five years immediately preceding the request; or
  - the applicant has concluded at least one year of primary or secondary school in a Portuguese territory;
- foreign citizens born in a Portuguese territory, residing in Portugal for at least five years at the time of the request, if one of the parents resided in a Portuguese territory;

- foreign citizens who are descendants of Portuguese citizens by origin, who have been residing in Portugal for a minimum of five years immediately before the request, as long as the parentage has been established at the moment of birth of the Portuguese citizen; or
- foreign citizens who, not being considered stateless, have had Portuguese nationality, as well as foreign citizens who descend from Portuguese citizens, members of communities of Portuguese ancestry and foreign citizens who have been called to render relevant services to the Portuguese State or the national community.

Portuguese nationality may also be granted to foreign citizens who descend from Portuguese Sephardic Jews.

## → LOW CRIME RATE

Portugal has one of the world's lowest crime rates with violent crimes being a rare occurrence.



# ROMANIA

📍 BUCHAREST ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Romania maintains citizenship rights based on a mixture of territorial (jus soli) and lineage ties (jus sanguinis).

Consequently, Romanian citizenship can generally result from:

- › attribution by lineage or by birth in Romania to at least one parent who was born in Romania;
- › regaining/restoring by lineage/descent up to the second or third degree, under certain conditions;
- › adoption, whereby both or one of the adopters are Romanian citizens;
- › acquisition by request (for example, birth from non-Romanian parents and/or domicile in Romania), under certain conditions.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child will be a Romanian citizen if they:

- have at least one Romanian parent, regardless of where the child is born;
- were found in Romanian territory to parents who are unknown (they will be considered Romanian unless the contrary is proven); or
- were adopted by Romanian citizens.



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POPULATION  
20 million



SIZE  
238,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Romanian Leu



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Romanian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.8 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Sibiu salami



## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### BIRTH AND DOMICILE IN ROMANIA

A child born in Romania to non-Romanian parents may obtain Romanian citizenship. Depending on the child's age, the conditions to be met and the procedures are different, but domicile in Romania of at least eight years is mandatory in all cases.

### CITIZENSHIP FOR ADULTS THROUGH APPLICATION

The term naturalisation is not used in Romanian law, however the relevant authorities can grant citizenship upon request after eight years of residence.

The period of residence can be reduced to four years on the basis of marriage to a Romanian citizen, the applicant having an international reputation or holding EU Member State citizenship, or investments exceeding €1 million. Marriage itself does not automatically lead to Romanian citizenship acquisition.

The main requirements that have to be fulfilled, regardless of the residence period, are:

- lawful residence – an applicant's residence in Romania must be lawful;
- length of residence – an applicant must have resided in Romania for a minimum period of five years prior to submitting their application for a long stay residence permit (permanent stay): this is regarded as the last step towards citizenship acquisition;
- domicile of citizenship – the applicant must hold permanent residence in Romania. Case-law has established that this means that an applicant must have personal ties in Romania in addition to having their financial assets based in Romania; and
- good character and integration into the Romanian community – there is a 'good character' assessment. An applicant can be refused if they have a criminal conviction. An applicant must also pass a Romanian language exam, and have a basic understanding of Romanian history, culture and society.

## RESTORATION

Romanian citizenship can be granted to individuals who have lost their citizenship.

### → FAST 4G

It is one of the best places in the world for 4G speed. Users can expect speeds of 35.61 Mbs, around 40% faster than the speeds in the UK.

# SLOVAK REPUBLIC

📍 BRATISLAVA ✖️ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

There are several ways of acquiring citizenship of the Slovak Republic, for example by birth or adoption in the case of minors, or by a process of naturalisation for adults.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child will acquire Slovak citizenship, if:

- at least one of their parents is a Slovak citizen (regardless of the child's place of birth);
- they are born in the territory of the Slovak Republic and their parents are stateless; or
- they are born in the territory of the Slovak Republic, their parents are foreign nationals, and the child has not acquired the citizenship of either of the parents by birth.

If there is no other foreign citizenship proven, a child will also be considered a Slovak citizen, if they:

- were born in the territory of the Slovak Republic, or
- were found in the Slovak Republic and the parents are unknown.

A child will become a Slovak citizen by adoption if at least one of the adoptive parents is a Slovak citizen.



Daniel Futej

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POPULATION  
5 million



SIZE  
49,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Slovak



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.6 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Slovenska  
parenica (cheese)



## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

Citizenship of the Slovak Republic may be granted to an applicant who has been continuously and permanently resident in the Slovak Republic for at least eight years immediately preceding the application, and who meets the following general conditions:

- the individual must be of good moral character (no criminal history);
- they must demonstrate knowledge of the Slovak language and of the Slovak Republic's customs, culture and history;
- they must have held permanent residence for at least two years immediately preceding the application for the citizenship of the Slovak Republic; and
- they must have complied with all laws regulating the residence of non-nationals in the territory of the Slovak Republic. This includes public health insurance, social insurance, old-age pension savings, taxes, deductions, fees, employment of foreigners, etcetera.

Shorter residency requirements apply to the following categories of individuals:

- spouses of Slovak citizens married and living in the same household in the Slovak Republic for at least five years immediately preceding the application;
- those who have significantly contributed to the benefit of the Slovak Republic in the economic, scientific, technical, cultural, social or sport sphere, or it is otherwise in the interests of the Slovak Republic;
- those who have been continuously and permanently resident in the Slovak Republic for at least three years prior to reaching 18 years of age;
- a minor child, whose legal representative or guardian is a Slovak citizen or a legal person designated by the court of the Slovak Republic, and has been continually resident in the Slovak Republic for at least two years immediately preceding application for the citizenship ;
- those who were born in the Slovak Republic and held permanent residence for at least three years immediately preceding the application;
- those who have been continuously resident for at least ten years in the Slovak Republic and at the time of application have been granted a permanent residence permit, or are stateless and have been continuously resident in the Slovak Republic for at least three years immediately preceding the application;

- those who had previously renounced citizenship of the Slovak Republic and have held continuous residence in the Slovak Republic for at least two years immediately preceding the application; and
- in certain circumstances, those whose parents were, at the time of their birth, a Czechoslovak citizen and a foreigner.

Citizenship of the Slovak Republic may also be granted to an applicant who was issued a Slovak Living Abroad certificate without the condition of continuous permanent residence in the Slovak Republic for at least five years, if they have continually resided in the Slovak Republic for at least three years immediately preceding the application for Slovak citizenship.

There are also special regulations for applicants whose former Czechoslovak citizenship has expired, who lost their Czechoslovak citizenship or who were released from the citizenship of the Slovak Republic, and for former Slovak citizens.

## DUAL CITIZENSHIP

The Slovak Act on Citizenship restricts dual nationality. Generally, a Slovak national will lose their citizenship by acquiring the nationality of another country by the explicit expression of will. The loss of citizenship will not take place if:

- a Slovak citizen has acquired foreign citizenship in connection with marriage to a foreign national, provided that the foreign nationality has been acquired during the marriage; or
- the foreign citizenship was acquired by birth.

Since 2015, former citizens who lost their citizenship due to the dual nationality rules have had the possibility of applying for citizenship. The basis for resumption of citizenship would be if it was in the interests of Slovak Republic, however there is no legal guarantee of it being granted.

## → MIDPOINT OF EUROPE

The village of Kremnické Bane in the Slovak Republic claims to be the geographic midpoint of Europe, an honour it shares with seven other European villages vying for the title.



# SLOVENIA

📍 LJUBLJANA ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Slovenian citizenship can be obtained by:

- › origin;
- › birth in Slovenia
- › naturalisation; or
- › compliance with an international agreement.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

### CITIZENSHIP BY ORIGIN

A child will be a Slovenian citizen if:

- both parents are citizens of the Republic of Slovenia (RS) at the time of the child's birth;
- one of the parents is a citizen of the RS at the time of the child's birth and the child is born in the RS; or
- at the time of birth, one of the parents is a citizen of the RS and the other parent is unknown, or of unknown citizenship or stateless, and the child is born in a foreign country.



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POPULATION  
2 million



SIZE  
20,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Euro



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Slovenian



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.4 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Istrian olive oil



### CITIZENSHIP BY BIRTH IN THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

A child will be a Slovenian citizen if they are born or found in the territory of the RS and if their parents are unknown, of unknown citizenship, or stateless.

### CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

Citizenship by naturalisation includes a prescribed period of continuous residence in the RS, assuming that the person fulfills all other statutory conditions to be naturalised as set out below.

### REGULAR NATURALISATION

- length of residence: the applicant must have resided in the RS for a minimum period of 10 years, of which the five years prior to the submission of the application must have been continuous, and the applicant must have the legal status of a foreigner; or
- naturalisation with relief: this provides for a shorter statutory period of residence, if the person is married to a Slovenian citizen; if the person has lost Slovenian citizenship on the basis of renunciation or dismissal of citizenship, if the person is a Slovenian emigrant or their descendant; if the person is stateless, if the person is a refugee; if the person has attended and successfully completed at least higher education in the RS; if a person is born in the RS and has lived in the RS since birth; or if the person is a minor and lives in the RS.

The applicant must fulfill the following requirements when filing an application for citizenship:

- the applicant must be over 18 years of age;
- the applicant must renounce their current citizenship or prove that they will obtain such a release if they acquire citizenship of the RS;
- the applicant must have guaranteed funds that ensure their material and social security and that of any dependants;
- the applicant must meet a Slovenian language requirement;
- the applicant has not been sentenced by a final judgement to an unsuspended prison sentence longer than three months, or must not have been sentenced to a suspended prison sentence with a term of suspension longer than one year;

- the applicant's residence permit in the RS has not been revoked;
- the applicant's naturalisation poses no threat to the public order or the security or defence of the State;
- the applicant has settled all tax obligations; and
- the applicant gives an oath to respect the free democratic constitutional order established by the Constitution of the RS.

### EXTRAORDINARY NATURALISATION

In cases where an applicant has made a national benefit delivery to the RS for scientific, economic, cultural, national or similar reasons, this enables the acquisition of Slovenian citizenship after only a one year period of residence.

### DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Slovenia allows dual citizenship with the exception noted above that those acquiring Slovenian citizenship by naturalisation are normally required to renounce any foreign citizenship they hold.

## → HONEY AND GRAPE

In Slovenia, there is a vineyard or winery for every 70 people. Also, 1 in 20 people keep bees. There are around 90,000 beekeepers in a population of just 2 million.



# SPAIN

MADRID DUAL CITIZENSHIP


An individual can acquire Spanish citizenship by one of the following methods:

- > birth;
- > possession of status;
- > option;
- > residence; or
- > naturalisation.

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

An individual is entitled to automatic citizenship if they were:

- born to a Spanish mother or father;
- born in Spain to foreign parents, at least one of whom was born in Spain (except the children of diplomats);
- born in Spain to foreign parents who are both stateless or whose country's legislation does not grant nationality to the child;
- born in Spain and their parents' identities are unknown; or




Ángel Olmedo Jiménez

**Garrigues**


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**GARRIGUES**


POPULATION  
47 million




SIZE  
506,000 km<sup>2</sup>




CURRENCY  
Euro




OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Spanish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
7.6 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Palmero cheese,  
Cecina meat



- minors under the age of 18 adopted by a Spanish national.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### POSSESSION OF STATUS

Spanish nationality can also be acquired where the individual has possessed and used this nationality continuously for ten years, in good faith, on the basis of a document registered at the Civil Registry. In these cases the person concerned must have been active in the use and possession of Spanish nationality (i.e. exercising the inherent rights and complying with the obligations as a Spanish national).

### OPTION

An applicant can opt for Spanish nationality in the following cases:

- if they are or have been subject to the parental authority of a Spanish national. This possibility expires two years after the age of adulthood under the laws of the applicant's country (and so for countries where the age of adulthood is 18, this will be age 20);
- if their mother or father was Spanish and was born in Spain;
- if their parental filiation or birth in Spain is formalised after the age of 18. The applicant may opt for Spanish nationality within two years from the time parentage or birth is determined; or
- if they were adopted by Spanish nationals after the age of 18. The right to opt for nationality expires two years after the adoption is formalised.

### RESIDENCE

An individual who has lived in Spain for ten years legally, continuously and immediately before the application is also entitled to apply for Spanish nationality. Shorter residency terms apply in the following circumstances:

- if the person has refugee status: five years; or
- nationals of Latin American countries, Andorra, the Philippines, Equatorial Guinea, Portugal or persons of Sephardic origin: two years

A residency term of one year applies to:

- individuals born in Spain who did not duly exercise their right to opt for Spanish nationality;
- individuals who have been legally subject to the guardianship, tutorship or foster care of a Spanish citizen or institution for two consecutive years;
- individuals who have been married to a Spanish national for one year and who are not de facto or legally separated when filing the application;
- the widow/widower of a Spanish national if they were not legally or *de facto* separated at the time of the spouse's death; or
- individuals born outside Spain to a Spanish mother, father, or grandparent, provided that they were all originally Spanish.

### NATURALISATION

Finally, nationality may be obtained by naturalisation. This is discretionary, and is not subject to general provisions. It is granted only in exceptional circumstances.

## → LOST FOR WORDS

Spain's national anthem, *Marcha Real*, has no words. There are only four countries where this is the case.



# SWEDEN

📍 STOCKHOLM ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

A child automatically acquires Swedish citizenship by birth if one parent is a Swedish citizen or if a deceased parent was a Swedish citizen at the time of their death. Slightly more restrictive requirements apply to children born before 1 April 2015.

A child who is adopted by a Swedish citizen before reaching the age of 12 may also acquire Swedish citizenship if certain requirements are fulfilled.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

An individual can become Swedish through either a naturalisation or registration procedure, depending on their individual circumstances.

## NATURALISATION

To be naturalised, an applicant normally has to demonstrate that they:

- can prove their identity;
- have reached 18 years of age;
- hold a permanent residence permit in Sweden;
- have been living in Sweden for between two and five years, depending on nationality; and



Emmy Falck

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POPULATION  
10 million



SIZE  
450,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Swedish Krona



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
Swedish



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
5.0 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Kalix Löjrom  
(small fish)



- have had, and are expected to have, an honest way of living.

There is no absolute right to acquire Swedish citizenship, even if these requirements are fulfilled.

Further, an applicant who wishes to obtain Swedish citizenship and does not fulfil the above requirements may still be naturalised if:

- they have previously been a Swedish citizen;
- they are married or co-habiting with a Swedish citizen; or
- there are any other particular reasons that justify an exception.

If a person cannot prove their identity, the individual may still achieve naturalisation if they have been living in Sweden for eight years and it is likely their stated identity is correct.

## REGISTRATION

Citizenship can also be obtained through registration. Normally this is used for children (i.e. individuals under the age of 18); young adults (i.e. individuals between the age of 18 and 21); or individuals who have lost their citizenship.

A child acquires Swedish citizenship through registration by the individual(s) who have custody if the child has a permanent residence permit and has been living in Sweden for at least three years (two years if stateless).

Specific rules apply in special circumstances, for example if the child is a citizen of a Nordic country or is stateless and born in Sweden.

If an individual obtains citizenship through registration and has a child who is not married, the child could, if certain requirements are fulfilled, also acquire Swedish citizenship.

An individual aged between 18-21 years may acquire Swedish citizenship through registration if they have a permanent Swedish residence permit and have lived in Sweden since the age of 13 (age of 15, if stateless).

An adult who has lost their citizenship may acquire Swedish citizenship through registration if they hold a permanent residence permit in Sweden and have lived in Sweden for a combined period of at least 10 years, which must include the two year period immediately preceding the application.

## → IKEA IS KING

Every year there are more copies printed of the IKEA catalogue than the Bible.

# UNITED KINGDOM

📍 LONDON ✓ DUAL CITIZENSHIP

An individual not automatically British at birth can acquire citizenship through:

- › an application to naturalise (adults only); or
- › an application to register (both children and adults).

## AUTOMATIC CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH

### BIRTH IN THE UK

If you are born in the UK on or after 1 January 1983, you will be a British citizen otherwise than by descent if at least one of your parents:

- was living permanently in the UK at the time of birth; and
- was a British Citizen or ‘settled’ in the UK when you were born.

In the UK, ‘settled’ has a very precise meaning and includes those who hold:

- a ‘right of abode’;
- indefinite leave to remain;
- permanent resident status; or
- ‘settled status’ under the Settled Status Scheme.



Jacqueline Moore

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SHEPHERD+ WEDDERBURN

POPULATION  
66 million



SIZE  
242,000 km<sup>2</sup>



CURRENCY  
Pound Sterling



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
English



HOURS OF SUNSHINE  
(DAILY AVERAGE)  
4.5 hours



PDO FOOD PRODUCTS  
Cheddar Cheese,  
Scotch Beef,  
Cornish Pasty



Prior to July 2006, a father could pass on his British nationality to his children only if he was married to their mother at the time of their birth.

### BIRTH OVERSEAS

If you were born outside the UK to a British parent on or after 1 January 1983, you will be a British citizen by descent if one of your parents:

- was a British citizen and born in the UK; or
- was naturalised or registered as a British citizen prior to your birth.

British citizenship “by descent” is a less advantageous form of citizenship compared to other forms of British citizenship. It can’t be passed on to children born overseas.

## CITIZENSHIP OBTAINED BY APPLICATION

### NATURALISATION

An adult who fulfils certain conditions can apply to naturalise as a British citizen.

There are minimum periods of residency required, which differ for those who apply on the basis of marriage or civil partnership with a British citizen and those who don’t fall into this category. The periods of lawful residence are three years for those married to or in a civil partnership with a British citizen and five years for all other cases. In addition, an applicant must have held ‘settled status’ for at least 12 months unless they are married or in a civil partnership with a British citizen. This means in practice that those not married or in a civil partnership with a British citizen will require to wait in most cases six years to naturalise and for those married to a British citizen, it normally takes five years.

There are also rules on the periods of absences during the permitted five/three year period and the last 12 month period.

You can only acquire British citizenship through marriage if you have obtained settled status. Settled status under UK domestic law normally requires an applicant to:

- have lived continuously in the UK for a minimum five year period; and
- be of good character.

Applications will be refused due to either an adverse immigration or criminal history.

Applicants for naturalisation must also:

- intend to reside permanently in the UK; and
- have sufficient knowledge of language and life in the UK.

Applicants must pass an online multiple choice test containing 24 questions relating to British culture and history. In addition, an English language requirement must be met by being from a majority English language speaking country, holding a UK-taught degree or a recognised degree taught elsewhere in English or by passing an approved English language test.

### REGISTRATION APPLICATION

#### Adults

The main category of adults who can apply to register as British citizens are those who would have been automatically British under previous laws that discriminated against them both on the grounds of legitimacy and gender.

#### Children

Children can apply to register both on automatic and discretionary grounds. Children born in the UK to parents who subsequently acquire “settled status” after their birth and children born in the UK who have lived in the UK for the first 10 years of their lives are entitled to automatically register as British citizens. Children born outside the UK to parents who are British citizens by descent can also apply to automatically register where their parent has previously lived in the UK for a period of three years.

Children who do not meet either the automatic or discretionary criteria for registration can apply to register at the Secretary of State’s discretion.

## LOSS OF BRITISH NATIONALITY

British nationality cannot be lost through absences. It can however be lost in cases of serious criminality but only where this does not lead to the individual becoming stateless.

## → ROYAL PASSPORT PARDON

Queen Elizabeth II has travelled to 116 countries despite not having a passport.





SHEPHERD+ WEDDERBURN

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