

DEPARTMENT FOR CITIZENSHIP & EXPATRIATE AFFAIRS

ACQUISITION OF MALTESE CITIZENSHIP BY BIRTH

When Malta became an Independent State on 21st September 1964, the Independence Constitution established who should become a citizen of Malta automatically by birth.

As a result of the changes in the citizenship laws which took place in the year 2000, as from 10th February 2000 the relative provisions are now to be found in the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap 188).

Did I automatically become a citizen of Malta with Malta's Independence?

You acquired Maltese citizenship with Malta's Independence only if:

- you were born in Malta before 21st September 1964 and at least one of your parents was also born in Malta;

OR

- you were born abroad but your father and a paternal grandparent were both born in Malta;

AND

- until 20th September 1964 you were still a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies.

Did I acquire Maltese citizenship by birth after 21st September 1964?

You acquired Maltese citizenship at birth if:

- you were born in Malta on or after 21st September 1964 but before 1st August 1989 (unless your parents were both non-Maltese and your father enjoyed diplomatic immunity in which case this does not apply);

OR

- you were born abroad on or after 21st September 1964 but before 1st August 1989, and when you were born, your father was a citizen of Malta by Birth in Malta, by Registration or by Naturalization.

Who becomes a citizen of Malta by birth as from 1st August 1989?

As from 1st August 1989, a person becomes a Maltese citizen if:

- he/she was born in Malta and at the time of his/her birth, his/her father or mother was a citizen of Malta or a person who enjoys freedom of movement, that is, a person born in Malta (of a parent likewise born in Malta if born before 21st September 1964) who ceased to be a citizen of Malta after emigrating;

OR

he/she was born abroad and at the time of his/her birth, his/her father or mother was a citizen of Malta by Birth in Malta, by Registration or by Naturalization.

If I retained the citizenship of another country on 21st September

1964, or if I acquired another citizenship at birth or during my minority, what steps should I have taken to safeguard my Maltese citizenship?

- If you were an adult on 21st September 1964 you should have renounced any other citizenship held by you by not later than 20th September 1967. If you failed to do so, you ceased to be a citizen of Malta as from the following day.
- If, on your eighteenth birthday, you were a citizen of Malta and a citizen of another country, you had to renounce your other citizenship before your nineteenth birthday in order to retain your Maltese citizenship. **This applied to those persons who were nineteen (19) years of age before the 10th February 2000.**

Has my position changed as a result of the year 2000 amendments to the citizenship laws?

In view of the amendments made to the Maltese Citizenship Act, which became effective as from 10 February 2000, if you:

- became a citizen of Malta on 21st September 1964 or at birth;
- subsequently lost Maltese citizenship; and
- have resided outside Malta for an aggregate period of at least six years,

then you have re-acquired Maltese citizenship **automatically**.

If, however, you do not qualify for the automatic re-acquisition of Maltese citizenship (because you did not spend six years abroad or because you were previously a citizen of Malta by registration or by naturalization) then you may re-acquire such citizenship by applying to be registered as a citizen of

Malta. (See leaflet on registration as a citizen of Malta).

If you were a minor on 10th February 2000, or if you were then over 18 years of age but had not yet attained your 19th birthday, and was in possession of another citizenship, apart from your Maltese citizenship, you may hold both citizenships indefinitely.

If I am a citizen of Malta and I am over eighteen years old, what happens if I acquire another citizenship?

Section 7 of the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap. 188), which came into effect as from 10 February 2000 stipulates that:

It shall be lawful for any person to be a citizen of Malta, and at the same time a citizen of another country.

Therefore, an adult citizen of Malta who acquires another citizenship (or other citizenships) after the 10 February 2000 may retain such citizenship/s together with his/her Maltese citizenship.

Can a certificate of Maltese citizenship be issued for a citizen of Malta?

Such certificates may only be issued if they are absolutely required by the Government of a foreign country as definite proof of a person's national status. A request from the authorities of the country concerned should be produced before a certificate of Maltese citizenship is issued. This certificate is issued against a fee of Lm5 (€11.65)*.

What documents are required?

Our Department will require the following documents:

* Euro values are for information only.

Your:

- (1) Birth certificate;
- (2) Father's birth certificate;
- (3) Parents' marriage certificate;
- (4) Passport;
- (5) Identity card.

If you are a married woman or a widow, you will also have to produce your marriage certificate. Furthermore, if your husband/late husband was born in Malta we will also require his birth certificate, his father's birth certificate and his parents' marriage certificate.

Points to be noted:

- In certain cases, you may be asked to provide additional documents to the ones indicated;
- Where births, marriages or deaths occurred in Malta or Gozo, you must produce original certificates - photocopies are not accepted.

You may obtain original certificates from the Public Registry at:

- 26, Old Treasury Street, Valletta CMR 02; or
- 139, Republic Street, Victoria VCT 102, Gozo;
- by using the postal services. Application forms may be collected from the Public Registry offices outlined above or from Police Stations, Post Offices or Local Councils. You will receive the relevant certificate within three working days;
- where births, marriages or deaths occurred outside Malta, you must produce original certificates. These will then be photocopied by our Department and returned to you.

Should you have any further enquiries on Citizenship matters please address them to:

**The Director,
Department for Citizenship and
Expatriate Affairs,
3, Castille Place,
Valletta CMR 02.**

You may also contact the Department on:
Tel No: (356) 22001800
Fax No: (356) 22001830
E-mail: citizenship@gov.mt

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