

DEPARTMENT FOR CITIZENSHIP & EXPATRIATE AFFAIRS

ACQUISITION OF MALTESE CITIZENSHIP BY NATURALISATION

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

Acquisition of Maltese citizenship by registration means that a person has the right to acquire citizenship upon application under the provisions of the said Constitution. [As a result of the changes in the citizenship laws which took place in the year 2000, as from the 10th February 2000 the relative provisions are now to be found in the Maltese Citizenship Act (Cap. 188). New categories of persons eligible to apply for registration have also been added.]

The Maltese Citizenship Act, which complemented the provisions made under the Constitution, established who could become a citizen of Malta by naturalisation, that is, who having satisfied the relative conditions of the said Act, could be granted Maltese citizenship. In accordance with the Cabinet Citizenship Guidelines, an application is normally considered favourably if:

- You are a former citizen of Malta;
- You were born abroad to Maltese parents who are returned migrants;
- You were born in Malta, you hold a foreign citizenship, and at least one of your parents is a citizen of Malta;
- You were born to parents who were non-Maltese but one of whom or both subsequently acquired Maltese citizenship;

- You were born abroad and you are of Maltese descent.

If your application does not fall within one of the categories listed above, your request will only be given favourable consideration if there are humanitarian aspects involved.

Do I qualify to apply for naturalisation as a citizen of Malta?

Provided that you are over eighteen years of age, you may submit an application if:

Category A:

You are a foreigner or stateless person and:

- you have resided in Malta throughout the twelve months immediately preceding the date of application; and
- you have resided in Malta for periods amounting in the aggregate to a minimum of four years, during the six years preceding the above period of twelve months; and
- you are of good character; and
- you have an adequate knowledge of the Maltese or the English language; and
- you would be a suitable citizen of Malta.

Prior to submitting an application you have to present the following document to our Department:

- 1) A residence certificate issued by the Principal Immigration Officer, Police General Headquarters, Floriana. For this purpose you must provide this Officer with your current passport, as well as all expired passports in your possession which cover the periods of your residence in Malta.

Once our Department assesses the above certificate and confirms that you are eligible to proceed with your application, additional documents will have to be produced.

- If you are a former male citizen of Malta or a former female citizen of Malta who has never been married, we will require:

Your:

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

As well as:

- 7) A police conduct certificate;
 - 8) Three passport-size photographs of yourself.
- If you are a former female citizen of Malta who is, or has been, married to a former citizen of Malta, we will require certificates 1 to 8, as well as the following documents:

- 9) Your marriage certificate;

Your husband's:

- 10) Birth certificate;
- 11) Father's birth certificate;
- 12) Parents' marriage certificate;
- 13) Passport (or last passport held, if available);
- 14) Identity card (if applicable).

- If you are a foreigner with no Maltese parentage, we will require documents 1 to 8 above, with the exception of certificates 3 and 4. If you are a

married/divorced female or a widow, we will also require your marriage certificate.

At the time of application you are enjoined to submit a letter explaining why you wish to become a citizen of Malta. This letter should contain information on your period/s of stay in Malta, details about employment in Malta if applicable, participation in social activities and any other information which you consider appropriate.

Category B:

You were born abroad of a father likewise born abroad but your paternal grandfather and great-grandparent were both born in Malta. In this case, the following documents must accompany your application:

Your:

- 1) Birth certificate showing names of parents;
- 2) Father's birth certificate showing names of parents;
- 3) Paternal grandfather's birth certificate;
- 4) Paternal great-grandfather's birth certificate;
- 5) Parents' marriage certificate;
- 6) Paternal grandparents' marriage certificate;
- 7) Passport;
- 8) Marriage certificate (if you are a married woman or a widow);

As well as:

- 9) Three passport-size photographs of yourself.

Applications under this category are normally accepted only if applicant is residing in Malta.

Category C:

You were born in Malta prior to 21 September 1964 of a parent likewise born in Malta, or you were born in Malta after

that date, and you ceased to be a citizen of Malta whilst being emigrated.

As from 10 February 2000 persons under this Category may be registered as citizens of Malta. See Leaflet on 'Acquisition of Maltese Citizenship by Registration.'

Category D:

You can prove descent from a person born in Malta, you are a citizen of a country other than the country in which you reside and your access to the country of which you are a citizen is restricted.

In this case, you must produce all birth and marriage certificates as necessary, starting from your birth and ascending to the ancestor who was born in Malta. If the link is broken or cannot be proved by documentary evidence or, if the birth certificate of the ancestor born in Malta cannot be traced, then you cannot submit an application for citizenship.

Category E:

You are a citizen of Malta and, according to law, you have authority over your minor child,

or

You are a person who, according to law, has authority over the minor child of a citizen of Malta.

If so, you may apply for the said minor to be naturalised as a citizen of Malta. In this case, firstly, you would have to produce an authorisation, as necessary, prior to submitting an application. Subsequently:

- (i) If you, as the applicant, are:
- a male citizen of Malta;
 - a female citizen of Malta whose husband holds a foreign citizenship;
 - a widowed citizen of Malta whose late husband held a foreign citizenship;

we will require the following documents:

Your:

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

(ii) If you, as the applicant, are a citizen of Malta and the widow of a citizen of Malta, we will require the following documents:

Your:

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

Your late husband's:

- 6) Birth certificate;
- 7) Father's birth certificate;
- 8) Parents' marriage certificate;
- 9) Passport (or last passport held, if available);
- 10) Identity card (if applicable);

As well as:

- 11) Your marriage certificate.

(iii) If you, as the applicant, are a tutor/tutress appointed by the Court, the certificates required would depend on whether you are a citizen of Malta or not.

In all cases, (i) to (iii), you will also be required to present the minor child's birth certificate showing the names of the parents, together with three passport-size photographs of the child.

N.B. 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 service. 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.

How do I apply for naturalisation as a citizen of Malta?

- Present the required documents to an official at the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs.

After having ascertained that all the necessary documents have been produced and that these are in order, this official will complete an application form which you will verify and sign.

- If you fall within categories A, B, or C, you must then find two sponsors (not relatives) who will be required to complete the relevant part of the application form. Their signature would then have to be witnessed and countersigned by another person.

You may choose any of the following persons as your first sponsor:

- A member of Parliament;
- A judge;
- A magistrate;
- An advocate;
- A notary public;
- A legal procurator;
- A medical practitioner;
- A public officer not below the rank of principal;
- A police officer not below the rank of inspector;
- An officer of the Armed Forces of Malta not below the rank of captain;

- A parish priest.

Your second sponsor may be any citizen of Malta provided that he/she did not acquire Maltese citizenship by naturalisation and that he/she is over eighteen years of age.

- If you fall within category D, your first and second sponsors may be any citizen of Malta as long as the person concerned did not acquire Maltese citizenship by naturalisation.
- If you fall within category E, sponsors will be required as in category A if the minor child is over fourteen years of age.
- You will then be required to present the completed application form to an official at our Department who will administer the necessary oaths as well as the Oath of Allegiance to the Republic of Malta (NB the latter oath is not required in the case of category E). Apart from the fee for the said oaths you will then have to pay the prescribed application fee of Lm15 (€34.94)*.

N.B. In the case of applications that are made through one of Malta's Missions abroad, the administering of the necessary oaths has to be made either before an Official from the Mission concerned who is duly authorised to act as Commissioner for Oaths or before a person who, according to the law of the country concerned, is empowered to administer oaths.

- Your application will be processed by our Department within a few weeks. All applicants (except minor children and persons in category D who reside abroad) will be asked to call at the Police Immigration Office in Floriana for an interview. If everything is found to be in order, you will be naturalised as a citizen of Malta. You will be considered to be a citizen of Malta as from the date on your certificate of naturalisation. You will then be asked

* Euro values are for information only.

to call at our Department to collect this certificate against a fee of Lm30 (€69.88)*.

- If you were born abroad, the official from our Department who is dealing with your case, will prepare a letter for the Director of Public Registry so that your birth certificate may be registered at his office. You must present this letter at the Public Registry together with your original birth certificate, and an official translation in English or Maltese, or a photocopy thereof duly certified as a true copy by a Notary Public, an Advocate or a Legal Procurator.

Points to be noted:

- In certain cases, you may be asked to provide additional documents to the ones indicated.
- A list is published in the Government Gazette, not later than fifteen days after the end of every quarter, containing the name and surname of all the persons who were naturalised as citizens of Malta during the immediately preceding quarter.
- As Malta accepts dual or multiple citizenship you may hold your Maltese citizenship together with your current citizenship or citizenships.

However, you are advised to verify whether under the citizenship laws of your country you might lose your current citizenship if you were to acquire another citizenship by a voluntary act. (Vide leaflet on dual/multiple citizenship).

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

The Director,

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**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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