



How can you acquire Dutch citizenship?



Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst

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1. Why this brochure?

What do you have to do to acquire Dutch citizenship? This question is central to this brochure. This brochure is intended for all foreign nationals not of Dutch descent who wish to acquire Dutch citizenship.

A separate brochure has been published for foreign nationals who live outside the Netherlands and for former Dutch citizens (see Chapter 8 Further information). In this brochure you will find information on:

- the requirements you have to satisfy to acquire Dutch citizenship.
- which documents are required.
- how the request procedure works.

Three ways of acquiring Dutch citizenship

There are three ways of acquiring Dutch citizenship.

By operation of law: through birth or recognition. Each child of a married Dutch father or mother will automatically have Dutch citizenship after its birth, but also if it is born outside the Netherlands.

The child of an unmarried Dutch mother will also automatically have Dutch citizenship after its birth. However, a child of an unmarried non-Dutch mother and a Dutch father will only acquire Dutch citizenship if the father recognises the child before birth or recognises the child after birth but before it reaches the age of 7. If the child is not recognised by someone with Dutch nationality until it is 7 or older, the Dutch

father will have to prove that he is the biological father with DNA evidence within one year after recognition of the child.

This DNA evidence will have to satisfy strict requirements. If the person who recognises the child does not want to produce DNA evidence or is unable to do so, he may elect to file an option with respect to the child (aged 7 or over) with the municipality.

He will, however, be required to take care of the child and raise it for three years.

Finally, a separate scheme applies to children that were recognised or legitimised after 1 April 2003 but before 1 March 2009 by a Dutch citizen. More information concerning these option possibilities can be obtained from the municipality.

Dutch citizenship can also be acquired for minor children by operation of law through adoption.

By means of the option procedure: by making a declaration that you wish to acquire Dutch citizenship. The procedure applies to several groups, for example children of immigrants that are born in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba.

By means of naturalisation: this is the third possibility of acquiring Dutch citizenship. This brochure deals with the second and third possibility.

2. Acquiring Dutch citizenship - in brief

If you wish to acquire Dutch citizenship, you will have to deal (in the Netherlands) with two government agencies: the municipality and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND).

The mayor of your municipality

If you are of the opinion that you satisfy the requirements for option or naturalisation, you can visit the municipality. An employee of the municipality will go through the requirements together with you to determine whether you satisfy these requirements and will help you file a request for naturalisation or option. The mayor will decide on your request if you satisfy the requirements set in respect of an option. If the request concerns naturalisation, the mayor will draw up a recommendation for the IND and will send this recommendation together with your request for naturalisation to the IND. Please bear in mind that the mayor will not be able to tell you with 100% certainty, in cases of naturalisation, whether you will be able to acquire Dutch citizenship.

Immigration and Naturalisation Service

When you file a request for naturalisation, it is the IND which will ultimately decide whether you will be able to acquire Dutch citizenship. The IND can perform an extra investigation to determine whether you

satisfy all requirements. This could cause the IND's decision to deviate from the recommendation issued by the mayor. Those who wish to submit a request for naturalisation abroad may approach a Dutch embassy or consulate.

Conditions

The first thing you have to do is establish whether you satisfy the conditions. The conditions are listed in Chapter 3 of this brochure. Separate conditions apply to the option and the naturalisation procedures. If you satisfy the conditions that apply to option, you can make an option statement before the mayor. If you satisfy the conditions that apply to naturalisation, you can submit a request for naturalisation with the municipality.

Documents

If you file a request, the mayor will ask you for several documents. These include your passport, residence permit, birth certificate, marriage certificate etc. You may have to take a civic integration examination to show that you are sufficiently integrated. The mayor will furthermore establish whether you have been in contact with the police.

Costs

Costs are involved in both the option and

the naturalisation procedure. Please take an amount of between € 144 and € 482 into account. You will be expected to pay these costs at the same time you submit the request. Consult your municipality or the IND website for the costs currently applicable: www.ind.nl

Assessment

In the option procedure, the mayor will handle the request. The mayor will decide whether you will be awarded Dutch citizenship. In the event of naturalisation, an employee of the municipality will compile a file and send this together with a recommendation to the IND. The IND will decide on your request for naturalisation.

If your request is granted, a recommendation for the award of Dutch citizenship will be presented for signature to Her Majesty the Queen. The Queen ultimately awards Dutch citizenship. Once your request for naturalisation has been granted, the mayor will invite you to attend a naturalisation ceremony. The significance of Dutch nationality and your connection with Dutch society will be emphasised during this ceremony. You are obliged to attend the naturalisation ceremony and make the “Declaration of Solidarity” at that occasion. This Declaration of Solidarity will have to be made if your option statement

or your request for naturalisation were made or submitted on or after 1 March 2009. You will not acquire Dutch citizenship until you have attended the naturalisation ceremony, made the Declaration of Solidarity and received the announcement.

If you do not satisfy the requirements for naturalisation, you will receive a letter from the mayor or the IND which will indicate why you do not qualify for Dutch citizenship. You may file an objection against this decision. This procedure will be explained in that letter.

Term

Do you wish to make use of the option procedure? Please take into account a term of approximately three months after the mayor has received your declaration. The naturalisation procedure will take (at most) one year.

Renouncing your nationality

If you acquire Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation, you will in principle be required to renounce your current nationality or nationalities. You will have to produce evidence thereof. There are exceptions to this requirement, which are listed in Chapter 3 of this brochure.

In the option procedure, the legislation of the country of your current nationality will

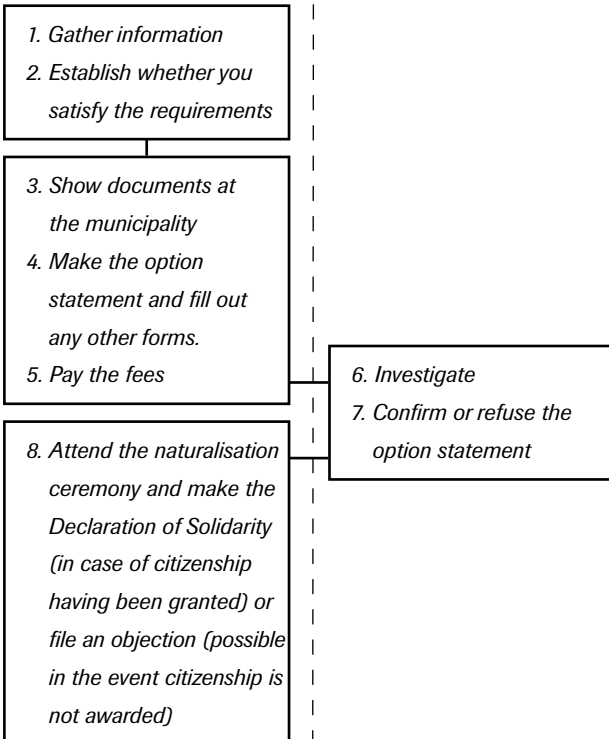
decide whether you will lose that nationality. You will not be required to renounce it yourself.

Both procedures are set out in a diagram on the next pages.

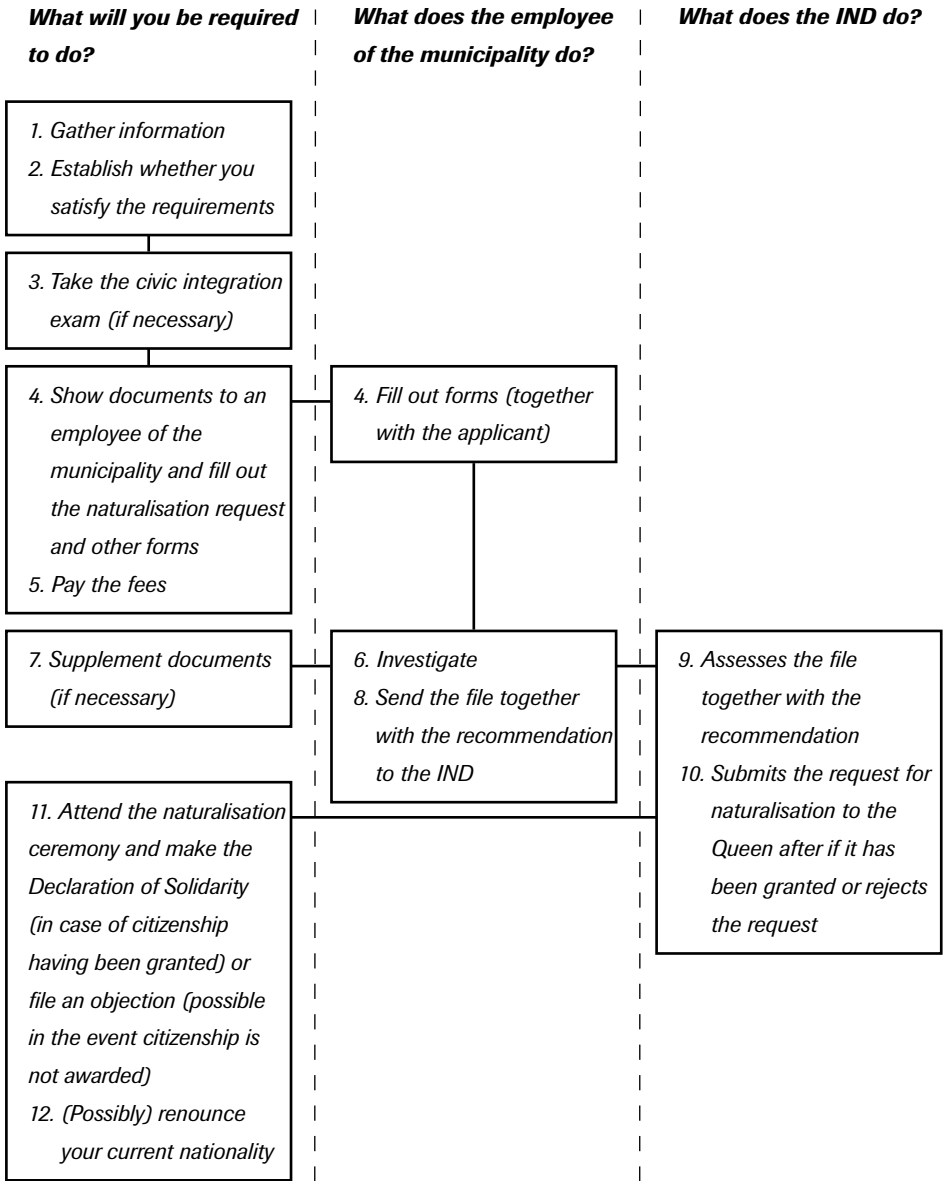
Option procedure

What will you be required to do?

What does the mayor do?



Naturalisation



3. Who qualifies?

If you wish to acquire Dutch citizenship you should first establish whether you satisfy the requirements of the option procedure. This is the fastest way of acquiring Dutch citizenship.

These conditions are set out below. We will subsequently deal with the conditions that apply if you wish to submit a request for naturalisation.

Acquiring Dutch citizenship by means of the option procedure

You can acquire Dutch citizenship by making an option statement in a number of cases. This is a simple and fast way of acquiring Dutch citizenship. To qualify for the option procedure you will nearly always be required to have a valid residence permit. You will additionally have to be willing to make the Declaration of Solidarity at the naturalisation ceremony. You can make use of this procedure if you satisfy **one of the conditions** listed below:

- You are of age (i.e. you are aged 18 or over. If you have not yet reached the age of 18, you will be considered of age if you are or have been married), born in the Netherlands as a child of immigrants, you have lived in the Netherlands since your birth and are in possession of a valid residence permit.
- You were born in the Netherlands, you have resided here legally without inter-

ruption for at least three years and have been without nationality since your birth (you are stateless). You will have to demonstrate that you are stateless.

Legally means that you are in possession of a valid residence permit.

- You are of age and you have resided legally in the Netherlands for four years since you reached the age of four.
- You are of age, a former Dutch national and you have resided in the Netherlands at least one year on the basis of a permanent residence permit or on the basis of a residence permit issued for a non-temporary purpose of stay (see the separate brochure for former Dutch nationals).
- You have been married for at least three years to a Dutch national and have resided legally in the Netherlands without interruption for at least fifteen years.
- You are aged 65 or over and have resided legally in the Netherlands without interruption for at least fifteen years.
- You were married to a non-Dutch husband before 1 January 1985 and have lost Dutch citizenship as a result. You can reacquire Dutch citizenship within a year of the dissolution of that marriage by means of the option procedure. The legal residence requirement does not apply in such cases.

Minor children may, after having been cared for and raised by at least one Dutch parent, also qualify for the option procedure under certain circumstances. Please contact the municipality for more information. Chapter 4 of this brochure contains more information on the option procedure.

Acquiring Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation

You may submit a request for naturalisation if you comply with **all requirements** listed below.

1. You are of age (i.e. you are aged 18 or over. If you are younger than 18, you will be considered of age if you are or have been married);
2. You have resided legally in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba.

Legally means: in possession of a valid residence permit. There are several exceptions to this rule.

- You are married to - or are a registered partner of - a Dutch man or woman. If this is the case, you will be able to submit a request for naturalisation after three years of marriage or registered partnership (possibly abroad) and uninterrupted cohabitation. If you have resided legally and without interruption in the Netherlands (both unmarried) with a Dutch man or woman, you will

also be able to submit a request for naturalisation. In the case of unmarried cohabitation, this cohabitation will need to have taken place in the Netherlands. In the case of marriage, the cohabitation may also have taken place abroad. Note: the cohabitation must have continued without interruption during the processing of your request for naturalisation up to the moment of the decision on your request.

- You are a former Dutch national: you once held Dutch nationality but lost it. In such cases you will not need to have lived in the Netherlands for a certain period. In some cases you will be able to make use of the option procedure. A special brochure is available for you in such circumstances (see Chapter 8 of this brochure).
3. You have a permanent residence permit or a residence permit for a non-temporary purpose of stay, such as family reunification or to work as an employee. You will not be eligible for naturalisation if you have a residence permit with a purpose of stay that is of a temporary nature, for example, as a student or to undergo medical treatment.
 4. You have been sufficiently integrated in Dutch society and you are able to speak, read, write and understand Dutch.

You have to demonstrate this by taking the civic integration exam. You may not have to take the civic integration exam if you have certain diplomas or certificates. This also applies to people who cannot take the civic integration exam due to serious physical or mental disabilities. More information on the civic integration exam can be found at www.inburgeren.nl and in the special brochure entitled “Civic integration exam: condition for naturalisation”. ‘Being integrated also means that you cannot be married to more than one man or woman at the same time.

5. During the last four years you have not received a custodial sentence, community service order and/or rehabilitation punishment or paid a major monetary fine. Nor is it allowed to have any criminal proceedings pending against you.

A ‘major monetary fine’ concerns an amount of € 453.78 or more. Your request will also be denied if you have received several fines of € 226.89 or more in the past four years, with a total amount of € 680.67 or more.

6. You are prepared to make the Declaration of Solidarity during the naturalisation ceremony. This declaration confirms

that you are aware that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (the Netherlands, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles) also apply to you. You cannot acquire Dutch citizenship if you do not make the Declaration of Solidarity.

7. You are willing to renounce your current nationality. Dutch citizenship may be revoked if you do not renounce your current nationality after you have acquired Dutch citizenship. In the case of a limited number of nationalities, you will be able to retain your current nationality. It may also be the case that you automatically lose your current nationality when you acquire Dutch citizenship. Your municipality’s Department of Civil Affairs can provide you with further information in this respect.

Sometimes you need not renounce your current nationality. You will need to demonstrate that you are not required to renounce your current nationality when you submit your request for nationalisation. You will not be required to renounce your current nationality in any of the following cases:

- The laws of the country of your current nationality do not allow the loss of your nationality. (www.ind.nl lists per country what regulations apply for renouncing your nationality).

- You are married to - or are the registered partner of - a Dutch national.
- You are a minor.
- You are in possession of an asylum residence permit.
- You were born in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba and you reside in the Netherlands at the time you submit your request for naturalisation.
- You resided in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba without interruption for five years or longer before you reached the age of eighteen.
- You are required - in order to renounce your current nationality - to pay a significant amount to the authorities of the country of your current nationality. You will be required to demonstrate this when you submit your request for naturalisation.
- You would lose certain rights when renouncing your nationality, which would cause you to incur serious financial losses. For example, rights under inheritance law. You will be required to demonstrate this when you submit your request for naturalisation.
- You have to perform, or buy off, military service before you will be able to renounce your nationality. You will be required to demonstrate this when you submit your request for naturalisation.

Therefore please establish what the consequences are of renouncing your current nationality and whether this involves costs. Please contact the authorities of the country of your current nationality to obtain this information.

The notions 'legally' and 'uninterrupted stay', as used in both procedures, mean that you have been in possession of a valid residence permit at all times during the above-mentioned period. This means that you always applied for an extension before your permit expired. You will be required to have a valid residence permit at all times during the option and naturalisation procedures as well.

Chapter 5 of this brochure contains more information on the naturalisation procedure.

4. How does the option procedure work?

The option procedure is a simple way of acquiring Dutch citizenship. Do you qualify for this procedure? If so, you can simply make a declaration that you wish to acquire Dutch citizenship. If you satisfy the conditions, the mayor will invite you for the naturalisation ceremony.

The significance of Dutch nationality and your connection with Dutch society will be emphasised during this naturalisation ceremony. You are obliged to attend the naturalisation ceremony and make the “Declaration of Solidarity” at that occasion. You will not acquire Dutch citizenship until you have attended the naturalisation ceremony, made the Declaration of Solidarity and received the announcement.

For whom?

Several groups of foreign nationals and former Dutch nationals can make use of the option procedure. Chapter 3 contains the conditions you have to satisfy. If you reside in the Netherlands, your children can also acquire Dutch citizenship if they satisfy a number of conditions (for example a residence permit). You must, in that case, state the details of your children in the option statement.

Procedure

Do you wish to make use of the option procedure and do you satisfy the conditions?

If so, you will have to make a option statement before the mayor (at your municipality’s Department of Civil Affairs). You will also be required to fill out and sign a statement in which you declare that you are willing to make the Declaration of Solidarity during the naturalisation ceremony. The mayor will investigate whether you have been in contact with the police. You will furthermore have to demonstrate that you were at all times in possession of a valid residence permit. If any doubt exists in this area, the mayor can obtain evidence in respect thereof from the IND.

Granted or rejected

If you satisfy all conditions for the option, the mayor will confirm in writing that you have acquired Dutch citizenship. The mayor will subsequently invite you for the naturalisation ceremony. If you do not satisfy all conditions, you will receive a letter explaining why you cannot acquire Dutch citizenship. You may file an objection against this decision. This procedure will be explained in that letter.

The ceremony

Acquiring Dutch citizenship is an event of special significance. Municipalities therefore organise special meetings, during which attention is devoted to the meaning

of Dutch citizenship. This naturalisation is ceremony is intended for everyone who acquires Dutch citizenship by means of the option or naturalisation.

You are obliged to attend the ceremony. Minors who make use of the option, and who were at the time that they made the option statement sixteen years of age or older, are obliged to attend the ceremony as well. You will not acquire Dutch citizenship until you have attended the naturalisation ceremony and at that occasion made the Declaration of Solidarity. If you do not attend the naturalisation ceremony, you will receive a new invitation to a subsequent naturalisation ceremony. You will have to attend the naturalisation ceremony within one year of the decision and receive the option confirmation following the Declaration of Solidarity or you will not acquire Dutch citizenship. If more than one year passes, you will have to start a new option procedure in order to as yet acquire Dutch citizenship. You will be excused from attending only in highly exceptional cases. Please contact your municipality if you think an exception applies to your situation. Minors making use of the option aged younger than sixteen will not be called up to attend the naturalisation ceremony, but are allowed to attend. His or her legal representative will be called up to

attend and is obliged to attend. This minor making use of the option will only acquire Dutch citizenship if his or her parent or legal representative attends the ceremony and makes the Declaration of Solidarity.

Term

The option procedure will take approximately three months.

Costs

You will have to pay a fee for the option procedure. The amount you will have to pay will be between € 144 and € 246. No costs are involved for children that are included in your request. Consult your municipality or the IND website www.ind.nl for the costs currently applicable. Your money will not be refunded if the option statement is not confirmed or if you withdraw your option statement at a later stage. The costs are a contribution to the investigation.

Loss of nationality

If you make use of the option procedure, the legislation of the country of your current nationality will decide whether you will lose that nationality.

5. What do you have to do to acquire Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation?

Gather information

First establish whether you are eligible for acquiring Dutch citizenship. Read the conditions contained in this procedure for this purpose. A handy checklist has been included in the back of the brochure. Also establish whether you are required to renounce your current nationality if you acquire Dutch citizenship. You cannot find the answer? Please consult the IND website: www.ind.nl or call telephone number 0900 1234561 (€ 0.10 per minute plus the costs of your mobile phone). You may also contact your municipality's Department of Civil Affairs.

Gather documents

If you are of the opinion that you satisfy all conditions for naturalisation, you may contact your municipality. The employee of the municipality will ask you to bring several documents. Which ones?

That depends on your personal situation.

These documents could include:

- Passport (yours, your partner's and that of your children).
- Residence permit (yours, your partner's and that of your children).
- Birth certificate (to be requested from your country of birth if not born in the Netherlands).
- Marriage certificate or a deed of registered partnership (if you wish to

acquire Dutch citizenship pursuant to a marriage or registered partnership with a Dutch national and the marriage was solemnised abroad).

- Evidence that you have cohabited for three years or longer with a Dutch national, if this is the ground on which your request for Dutch citizenship is based.
- Civic integration diploma, naturalisation test certificate or similar diploma.

Fill out the request for acquiring Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation

You will fill out the model 'Request for acquiring Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation' together with an employee of your municipality's Department of Civil Affairs. If your partner also wishes to naturalise, he or she must also be present during the submission of the request for naturalisation. If you have children, who reside in the Netherlands and have a valid residence permit, you may request Dutch citizenship for them as well. Their names and dates of birth must also be filled out on the form.

Children aged between 16 and 17 are, however, required to indicate that they agree to the request for (co)naturalisation. They have to sign in agreement, and therefore have to be present when the request for naturalisation is submitted.

Translation and legalisation of foreign documents

The municipality must be able to read and determine the authenticity of foreign instruments (birth certificates, marriage certificates etc.). That is why the following rules apply:

- If the instrument is drawn up in a language other than Dutch, English, German or French, you will need to have a translation drawn up, preferably in Dutch. This translation must be produced by a registered translator.*
- The municipality may require you to have the instruments legalised in the countries from which they originated. This constitutes verification as to whether the instrument was issued by the competent authority or authorities.*

The translation and legalisation of documents may take several months and the relevant costs will be for your account.

For more information about translating and legalising documents, please contact your municipality's Department of Civil Affairs or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see Chapter 8 for the telephone number).

Declaration of Solidarity

In addition to filling out and signing the request for acquiring Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation, you will also have to fill out a form declaring your agreement to making the Declaration of Solidarity during the naturalisation ceremony.

You confirm, by making this declaration, that you are aware that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (the Netherlands, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles) also apply to you. You will make this Declaration of Solidarity in person and in the Dutch language. You cannot acquire Dutch citizenship if you do not make the Declaration of Solidarity.

Signing the statement of intent

If you acquire Dutch citizenship by means of naturalisation, you will in principle be required to renounce your current nationality or nationalities. You will have to sign a statement to that effect when you submit your request for naturalisation.

In this statement, you indicate that you will renounce your current nationality. You may also indicate that you are of the opinion that you are not required to renounce your current nationality. Page 11 lists the exceptions. Following signature of the statement, you will be required to renounce your current nationality after you have acquired Dutch citizenship. You will

no longer be able to rely on an exception. It is therefore important that you investigate how to renounce your current nationality, whether there are any costs and what the consequences are. Please contact the authorities of the country of your current nationality before signing the statement of intent for this purpose.

Establishing or amending your name

Your name may have to be established or amended. You may request this yourself as well. Establishing or amending your name may be necessary in the following cases:

- You have no last name or no first name (but only one name or multiple names in which case no distinction can be made between the last name and the first name(s)).
- Your last name is the same as your first.
- Your name is hard to pronounce for Dutch nationals.
- Your name is hard to write down in Dutch.

If you acquired the name of your husband as a result of your marriage, you can have your name changed into your maiden name.

Meeting with minor children

If your children are aged 12 or older, the employee of the municipality will ask them about their opinion on acquiring Dutch

citizenship. Children between the ages of 12 and 16 are not obliged to acquire Dutch citizenship if one of the parents opposes this. If only the child or a single parent raises an objection, the government will decide. Children from the age of 16 decide for themselves whether they wish to acquire Dutch citizenship. Minor children are allowed to maintain their current nationality if one or both parent(s) acquire Dutch citizenship, unless legislation from the country of their current nationality provides otherwise.

Paying the costs of the procedure

You will have to pay a fee for the naturalisation procedure. Please take an income-dependent amount ranging from € 252 to € 482 into account. There are no costs involved for minor children that are included in your request for naturalisation. The fee must be paid when you submit your request for naturalisation. Consult your municipality or the IND website for the costs currently applicable: www.ind.nl. In some cases you may be granted an exemption from paying the fee for the naturalisation procedure; please contact your municipality for more information in this respect. Your money will not be refunded if your request is rejected or if you withdraw your request for naturalisation at a later stage. The costs

are considered a contribution to the investigation.

Assessment of your request for naturalisation

When the employee of the municipality has collected all information, he will conduct an investigation. He will investigate whether your identity has been sufficiently demonstrated and whether you have been in contact with the police. The mayor will subsequently issue a recommendation as to whether you qualify for naturalisation on the basis of all documents. He will also send your request for naturalisation with all file documents and the recommendation from the mayor to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). The IND will decide on your request for naturalisation. If your request is granted, a recommendation for the award of Dutch citizenship will be presented for signature to Her Majesty the Queen. The Queen ultimately awards Dutch citizenship.

Response to your request for naturalisation

Ultimately, there are only two possible responses to your request for naturalisation:

1. Your request for naturalisation has been granted and the mayor invites you to attend a naturalisation ceremony.

You will acquire Dutch citizenship when

you receive the naturalisation decision following the Declaration of Solidarity at the naturalisation ceremony.

2. Your request for naturalisation is rejected. You will receive a letter explaining why you cannot acquire Dutch citizenship. You may file an objection against this decision. This procedure will be explained in that letter. If you have requested Dutch citizenship for your children as well, this may be refused in some circumstances, independently of your own request for naturalisation.

The ceremony

Acquiring Dutch citizenship is an event of special significance. Municipalities therefore organise special meetings, during which attention is devoted to the meaning of Dutch citizenship. This naturalisation ceremony is intended for everyone who acquires Dutch citizenship by means of the option or naturalisation.

You are obliged to attend the naturalisation ceremony. Minors who, at the time of the submission of the request for (co)naturalisation, were aged sixteen or seventeen, are also obliged to attend the ceremony.

You will not acquire Dutch citizenship until you attend the naturalisation ceremony, make the Declaration of Solidarity in

person and in the Dutch language and you are awarded the decision on your request for naturalisation. If you do not attend the naturalisation ceremony, you will receive a new invitation to a subsequent naturalisation ceremony. You are obliged to attend the naturalisation ceremony within one year of the signature of the naturalisation decision or you will not acquire Dutch citizenship. If more than one year passes, you will have to start a new naturalisation procedure to as yet acquire Dutch citizenship. If you elect not to make the Declaration of Solidarity, in Dutch, at the naturalisation ceremony, you will not acquire Dutch nationality. You will be excused from attending the naturalisation ceremony only in highly exceptional cases. If you think such an exception applies to your situation, please contact your municipality.

Minors included in the naturalisation who are aged younger than sixteen will not be called up to attend the naturalisation ceremony, but will be allowed to attend. His or her parent or legal representative will be called up to attend and is obliged to attend. This minor will only acquire Dutch citizenship if his or her parent or legal representative attends the ceremony and makes the Declaration of Solidarity.

Minors included in the naturalisation who at the time of the submission of the request for (co)naturalisation were aged sixteen or seventeen, are obliged to attend the naturalisation ceremony. Minors aged sixteen or seventeen who independently submit a request for naturalisation will be additionally required to make the Declaration of Solidarity.

Renouncing your current nationality

Once you have attended the naturalisation ceremony and you have acquired Dutch citizenship, you still need to renounce your current nationality. You have to demonstrate that you have renounced your current nationality. If you do not, your Dutch nationality may be revoked. You are not required to renounce your current nationality if one of the exceptions applies to you (see page 11). Moreover, the legislation of the country of your current nationality provides whether you are able to renounce this nationality.

Term of the procedure

The assessment and approval of your request for naturalisation will require (at most) one year.

6. Benefits and consequences

You are about to acquire Dutch citizenship. This is quite a step. It is therefore good to have some advance knowledge on the consequences of Dutch citizenship.

Some things will change once your request for naturalisation is granted or your option statement is confirmed. The most important consequences are listed below:

- **As a Dutch national you will be included in the Municipal Administration.**

This would seem like a mere formality, but it is quite important: the personal data from the Municipal Administration (Gba) are used as the basis for all documents, therefore also for Dutch passports.

- **You will be able to apply for a Dutch passport.** A Dutch passport means in any case that you will be able to travel freely to all countries of the European Union. You may also choose a Dutch identity card.
- **You will participate in the vote for parliament.** If there are upcoming elections for the Lower House or for the Provincial Council, you will receive a notice to vote.
- **You minor children will also acquire Dutch citizenship.** This only applies if you have included your children in your request for naturalisation. Moreover, if your children are aged 12 or older, they must also want to acquire Dutch citizen-

ship. Children are furthermore required to have a valid residence permit.

- **You are no longer a foreign national.** You will be de-registered from the aliens register. You will have to hand in your residence permit. This also applies to any aliens or refugee passport.
- **You will have to renounce your current nationality.** You will, in principle, be required to renounce your current nationality when you acquire Dutch citizenship. This does not apply if one of the exceptions listed on page 11 applies to you. If you do not renounce your current nationality while this is required, your Dutch nationality may be revoked.

Note! If it turns out that you have committed fraud when you acquired Dutch citizenship, your Dutch citizenship may be revoked. This may occur up to twelve years after you acquired Dutch citizenship, even if this means you will become stateless. You may automatically lose Dutch citizenship if you voluntarily enlist in the armed services of a foreign state involved in combat operations against the Netherlands or an alliance to which the Netherlands is a party.

7. Frequently asked questions

Below please find a number of questions (and answers) that are often asked of the IND. Please visit our website for further questions: www.ind.nl

Where can I find more information on the civic integration exam?

For more information on the civic integration exam and for registering for the civic integration exam please call the Information Management Group at: +31 (0)50 599 9600. On the Internet at: www.inburgeren.nl or read the brochure 'Civic Integration Examination: condition for naturalisation'.

Where can I find more information on legalising documents?

For more information about legalising documents (birth certificates, marriage certificates) you can call, between 9am and 12:30pm, the Legalisation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at: +31 (0)70 348 59 01. Via the Internet: www.minbuza.nl

When can I apply for a Dutch passport at the municipality?

You may apply for a passport once you have attended the ceremony, made the Declaration of Solidarity and received the option confirmation or the announcement of the award of Dutch citizenship.

Please bear in mind that, after the ceremony, the municipality will require some time to adjust your data in connection with the new status of citizenship.

What will happen to my children if I acquire Dutch citizenship?

Your minor (children) will in principle also acquire Dutch citizenship, but this only applies if you have included your children in your option statement or your request for naturalisation. If they are aged 12 or older, your children themselves will moreover be required to declare in the request that they wish to acquire Dutch citizenship. Children are furthermore required to have a valid residence permit.

How long does the naturalisation procedure take?

The naturalisation procedure consists of three parts: one part at the municipality another part at the IND and the final part back at the municipality for the naturalisation ceremony. The total procedure will take a year at most.

8. More information

Do you still have questions after reading this brochure? Then please contact your municipality's Department of Civil Affairs or the IND. You may ask the IND questions by telephone, but also by means of a letter email.

Telefoon

The IND can be reached at 0900 1234561 (€ 0.10 per minute plus the costs of your mobile) on weekdays from 9am to 5pm. From abroad please call +31 20 889 30 45 (this number cannot be reached from the Netherlands). Do you have a question about the status of your request for naturalisation? Then please keep the following ready:

- the file number and/or V number, if known;
- name and first name (maiden name where relevant);
- place and date of birth;
- nationality.

Letter or email

Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst
afdeling Voorlichting
Postbus 3211
2280 GE Rijswijk

E-mail: voorlichting@ind.minjus.nl

Internet: www.ind.nl

Complaints

You may submit complaints about the manner in which you were treated by the IND, in writing, to:

Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst
Centraal Klachtenbureau
Postbus 5805
2280 HV Rijswijk

You may also call the IND's complaints line at: +31 (0)70 779 54 40.

Questions about legalisation?

For information on the legalisation of documents (birth certificates, marriage certificates) you can call, between 9am and 12:30pm, the Legalisation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at: +31 (0)70 348 59 01. Via the Internet: www.minbuza.nl

Personal Data Protection Act

The Personal Data Protection Act (Wbp) places an obligation on the IND to inform you that the IND is the organisation which processes the data in your application. The IND does this to determine whether you are eligible for a residence permit or naturalisation. This comes under the responsibility of the Minister of Justice. If you have any questions about the data processing procedure, you can submit them in writing to the IND, postbus 1200,

2280 CE Rijswijk. Here you can also submit a request for an overview of information held on your file. Further to this request you can ask to have your personal details changed, removed or protected.

Other brochures

The following brochures may be of importance for you in connection with the naturalisation and the option procedure:

- How can you acquire Dutch citizenship?
The procedure in Aruba.
- How can you acquire Dutch citizenship?
The procedure in the Netherlands
Antilles.
- How can you acquire Dutch citizenship
abroad? (*only via www.ind.nl*)
- Civic integration exam: condition for
naturalisation'.
- How can you reacquire Dutch citizen-
ship? Option and naturalisation
procedure for former Dutch nationals.

All brochures can be ordered by calling 0900 1234561 (€ 0.10 per minute plus the costs of your mobile phone) or via www.ind.nl. The texts of all brochures can also be found on the IND website: www.ind.nl

Checklist 1: Do you qualify?

For the option procedure

You can acquire Dutch citizenship by making an option statement, if you satisfy one of the following conditions:

- You are of age (i.e. you are aged 18 or over. If you have not yet reached the age of 18, you will be considered of age if you are or have been married), born in the Netherlands as a child of immigrants, you have lived in the Netherlands without interruption since your birth and are in possession of a valid residence permit.
- You were born in the Netherlands, you have resided here legally without interruption for at least three years and have been without nationality since your birth (you are stateless). You will have to demonstrate that you are stateless. Legally means: in possession of a valid residence permit.
- You are of age and you have resided legally in the Netherlands for four years since you reached the age of four.
- You are of age, a former Dutch national and have resided in the Netherlands for at least one year on the basis of a permanent residence permit or a residence permit for a non-temporary purpose of stay (see separate brochure for former Dutch nationals).
- You have been married for at least three years to a Dutch national and have resided legally in the Netherlands without interruption for at least fifteen years.
- You are aged 65 or over and have resided legally in the Netherlands without interruption for at least fifteen years.
- You were married to a non-Dutch husband before 1 January 1985 and have lost Dutch citizenship as a result. You can reacquire Dutch citizenship within a year of the dissolution of that marriage by means of the option procedure. The legal residence requirement does not apply in such cases.

Moreover, you will have to attend the naturalisation ceremony and at that occasion make the Declaration of Solidarity.

For naturalisation

You may submit a request for naturalisation if you comply with all requirements listed below:

- ✓ You are of age (i.e. you are aged 18 or over. If you are younger than 18, you will be considered of age if you are or have been married);
 - ✓ You have resided legally in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba for five years or longer. Legally means: in possession of a residence permit.
Note: Different conditions apply to persons who are married to, are the registered partner of or cohabit with a Dutch national;
 - ✓ You have a valid permanent residence permit or a valid residence permit for a non-temporary purpose of stay;
 - ✓ You are able to speak, read, write and understand the Dutch language and are able to demonstrate this by means of a Civic Integration Exam Diploma at A2 level or another document;
 - ✓ You are not married to more than one man or woman at the same time;
 - ✓ During the last four years you did not receive a custodial sentence, community service order and/or rehabilitation punishment, nor have you paid a major monetary fine.
- ✓ You are prepared to make the Declaration of Solidarity during the naturalisation ceremony.
 - ✓ You are willing to renounce your current nationality (there are some exceptions to this rule).

Checklist 2: Which documents should you bring?

To be completed by the employee of the municipality

The following documents are required to assess your request for naturalisation:

- a valid passport
 - of yourself
 - of your partner
 - of your children
 - a residence permit
 - of yourself
 - of your partner
 - of your children
 - birth certificate (when born abroad)
 - of yourself
 - of your partner
 - of your children
 - a marriage certificate or deed of registered partnership (if you wish to acquire Dutch citizenship pursuant to a marriage to or registered partnership with a Dutch national and the marriage was solemnised abroad)
 - proof that you have cohabited in the Netherlands with a Dutch national for three years or longer if this is the ground on which you request Dutch citizenship
 - civic integration diploma, naturalisation test certificate or similar diploma
 - other documents
-

Moreover, the following documents have to be translated and legalised (see page 16 for more information).

	<i>Translation</i>	<i>Legalisation</i>
<i>Your birth certificate</i>		
<i>Your partner's birth certificate</i>		
<i>Your children's birth certificate</i>		
<i>Marriage certificate</i>		
<i>Other documents</i>		

Your appointment

You are expected (with the above-mentioned documents) at:

Date

Time

Place

You have an appointment with

Costs of the request

www.ind.nl

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