

# **BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP LAW**

**Unofficial translation**

In force since 20.02.1999.

Promulgated in SG No. 136 of November 18, 1998 , amended in SG No. 41 of April 24, 2001, supplemented in SG No. 54 of May 31, 2002 , amended in SG No. 52 of June 29, 2007 , amended in SG No. 109 of December 20, 2007 , amended in SG No. 74 of September 15, 2009, amended in SG No. 82 of October 16, 2009 , amended in SG No. 33 of April 30, 2010, amended in SG No. 11 of February 7, 2012 , amended in SG No. No. 21 of March 13, 2012 , amended and supplemented by SG No. 16 of February 19, 2013 , amended by SG No. 66 of July 26, 2013 , amended by SG No. 68 of August 2, 2013, amended and supplemented by SG No. 108 of December 17, 2013, amended by SG No. 98 of November 28, 2014 , amended by SG No. 14 of February 20, 2015 , amended by SG No. 22 of March 24, 2015 , amended and supplemented by SG No. 103 of December 27, 2016 , amended SG. No. 77 of 18 September 2018, amended and supplemented SG. No. 21 of 12 March 2021 , amended SG. No. 22 of 18 March 2022 , amended SG. No. 26 of 1 April 2022

## **Chapter One. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Art. 1.** This law determines the conditions and procedure for the acquisition, loss and restoration of Bulgarian citizenship.

**Art. 2.** Bulgarian citizenship is governed by the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, by the law and by the international treaties in force at the time of the occurrence of the facts or events related to citizenship.

**Art. 3.** A Bulgarian citizen who is also a citizen of another state shall be considered only a Bulgarian citizen for the purposes of applying Bulgarian legislation, unless otherwise provided by law.

**Article 4.** Citizenship cannot be established through judicial proceedings.

**Art. 5.** The conclusion or dissolution of a marriage between a Bulgarian citizen and a foreign citizen or the change of citizenship of one of the spouses during the marriage does not change the citizenship of the other spouse by law.

**Article 6.** Adoption does not change the citizenship of the adoptee.

**Art. 7.** (1) No one may be deprived of Bulgarian citizenship except in the cases expressly provided for in this law.

(2) Everyone has the right to choose their nationality.

## **Chapter Two. ACQUISITION OF BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**

### **Section I. Acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by origin**

**Article 8.** A Bulgarian citizen by origin is anyone whose at least one parent is a Bulgarian citizen.

**Art. 9.** A Bulgarian citizen by origin is also any person who is recognized by a Bulgarian citizen or whose origin from a Bulgarian citizen has been established by a court decision.

## **Section II. Acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by place of birth**

**Article 10.** A Bulgarian citizen by birth is any person born on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, if he does not acquire another citizenship by origin.

**Article 11.** A child found on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria whose parents are unknown shall be deemed to have been born on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

## **Section III. Acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization**

**Art. 12.** (1) (Previous text of Art. 12 - SG, issue 108 of 2013) A person who is not a Bulgarian citizen may acquire Bulgarian citizenship if, on the date of submission of the application for naturalization:

1. is of legal age;
2. (supplemented - SG, issue 21 of 2012) has received a permit for permanent or long-term residence in the Republic of Bulgaria no less than 5 years ago;
3. has not been convicted of an intentional crime of a general nature by a Bulgarian court and no criminal proceedings have been initiated against him for such a crime, unless he has been rehabilitated;
4. (amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) has an income or occupation that enables him to support himself in the Republic of Bulgaria;
5. (amended and supplemented - SG, issue 41 of 2001, amended - SG, issue 74 of 2009, effective 15.09.2009, amended - SG, issue 68 of 2013, effective 02.08.2013) is fluent in Bulgarian, which shall be established in accordance with the procedure determined by an ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science, and
6. (new - SG, issue 41 of 2001) has been released from his/her previous citizenship or will be released from it at the time of acquiring Bulgarian citizenship.

(2) (New - SG, issue 108 of 2013) No release from their previous citizenship is required for:

1. persons - spouses of Bulgarian citizens;
2. citizens of a Member State of the European Union, of a State party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area, or of the Swiss Confederation;
3. citizens of countries with which the Republic of Bulgaria has concluded agreements establishing reciprocity.



**Art. 12a.** (Repealed - SG, issue 26 of 2022)



**Art. 13.** (Amended and supplemented - SG, No. 41 of 2001, supplemented - SG, No. 21 of 2012, amended - SG, No. 108 of 2013) A person who is not a Bulgarian citizen, meets the conditions under Art. 12, para. 1, items 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and has received a permit for permanent or long-term residence in the Republic of Bulgaria no less than 3 years ago as of the date of submission of the application for naturalization, may acquire Bulgarian citizenship if he also meets one of the following requirements:

1. has been and continues to be legally married to a Bulgarian citizen for at least 3 years;
2. (repealed - SG, issue 41 of 2001)
3. was born in the Republic of Bulgaria;
4. (supplemented - SG, issue 21 of 2012) the permanent or long-term residence permit was obtained before reaching the age of majority.
5. (repealed - SG, issue 41 of 2001)



**Art. 13a.** (1) (New - SG, issue 41 of 2001, supplemented - SG, issue 54 of 2002, in force from 01.12.2002, previous text of Art. 13a - SG, issue 52 of 2007, amended - SG, issue 108 of 2013) A person who has been granted refugee or asylum status no less than three years ago as of the date of submission of the application for naturalization may acquire Bulgarian citizenship if he meets the conditions under Art. 12, para. 1, items 1, 3, 4 and 5 .

(2) (New - SG, issue 52 of 2007, amended - SG, issue 108 of 2013) A person who has received humanitarian status no less than five years ago as of the date of submission of the application for naturalization may acquire Bulgarian citizenship if he meets the conditions under Art. 12, para. 1, items 1, 3, 4 and 5 .



**Art. 14.** (Amended - SG, No. 41 of 2001, supplemented - SG, No. 21 of 2012, amended - SG, No. 108 of 2013) A stateless person may acquire Bulgarian citizenship if he meets the conditions under Art. 12, para. 1, items 1, 3, 4 and 5 and has had a permit for permanent or long-term residence in the Republic of Bulgaria for no less than 3 years as of the date of submission of the application for naturalization.



**Art. 14a.** (New - SG, issue 16 of 2013, repealed - SG, issue 26 of 2022)



**Art. 15.** (1) (Amended - SG, No. 41 of 2001, previous text of Art. 15 - SG, No. 33 of 2010, amended - SG, No. 108 of 2013) A person who is not a Bulgarian citizen may acquire Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization without the conditions under Art. 12, Para. 1, Items 2, 4, 5 and 6 being met if he meets one of the following requirements:

1. is of Bulgarian origin;
2. (amended and supplemented - SG, issue 41 of 2001) is adopted by a Bulgarian citizen under the conditions of full adoption;
3. (new - SG, issue 41 of 2001) one of his parents is a Bulgarian citizen or has died as a Bulgarian citizen.

(2) (New - SG, issue 33 of 2010, amended - SG, issue 21 of 2021) In the procedure for acquiring Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization under para. 1, item 1, the application shall be accompanied by official documents issued by Bulgarian or foreign authorities, with which the applicant certifies that he/she has a family relationship with at least one person - his/her ascendant up to the third degree inclusive, who is of Bulgarian origin. The documents must contain information about the names of the ascendant and his/her family relationship with the applicant.

(3) (New - SG, issue 33 of 2010, repealed - SG, issue 21 of 2021)



**Art. 16.** A person who is not a Bulgarian citizen may acquire Bulgarian citizenship without the conditions under Art. 12 being met, if the Republic of Bulgaria has an interest in his naturalization or if the person has made special contributions to the Republic of Bulgaria in the public and economic spheres, in the field of science, technology, culture or sports.



**Art. 17.** Children up to the age of 14 shall acquire Bulgarian citizenship if their parents or their survivor accept Bulgarian citizenship or if only one of their parents does so, in case the other is a Bulgarian citizen. Under the same conditions, children from 14 to 18 years of age shall acquire Bulgarian citizenship if they so request.



**Art. 18.** (1) Children up to the age of 14, of whom only one of the parents is a Bulgarian citizen, in case they do not have Bulgarian citizenship, may become Bulgarian citizens without the conditions under Art. 12 being met, if both parents or the survivor of them give written consent to this. The consent of a parent who is deprived of parental rights is not required. Under the same conditions, children from 14 to 18 years of age may also acquire Bulgarian citizenship, if they so request.

(2) (Supplemented - SG, issue 41 of 2001) Under the conditions of paragraph 1, persons adopted by a Bulgarian citizen under the conditions of full adoption may also acquire Bulgarian citizenship.



**Art. 19.** The application of a person who meets the conditions for acquiring Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization shall be rejected if, in view of his conduct, there are serious reasons to believe that the applicant poses a threat to public order, public morals, public health or national security.

## **Chapter Three. LOSS OF BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**

### **Section I. Exemption from Bulgarian citizenship**



**Art. 20.** A Bulgarian citizen who permanently resides abroad may request release from Bulgarian citizenship if he has acquired foreign citizenship or if there is evidence of an open procedure for acquiring foreign citizenship.



**Art. 21.** (1) The release of parents from Bulgarian citizenship shall also release their children under the age of 14 from Bulgarian citizenship only if a request has been made for them as well. For the release of children from the age of 14 to 18, their consent shall also be required.  
(2) Where only one of the parents has filed an application for release from Bulgarian citizenship, the children may be released under the conditions of para. 1 only if the other parent has also given his consent. The consent of the parent shall not be required where he is deprived of parental rights.

### **Section II. Cancellation of naturalization**



**Art. 22.** (1) Naturalization, on the basis of which Bulgarian citizenship was acquired, may be revoked if the person:

1. has used data or facts that served as a basis for acquiring Bulgarian citizenship, which have been established by court order to be false, and/or
2. (supplemented - SG, issue 16 of 2013) has concealed data or facts which, if known, would be grounds for refusal to acquire Bulgarian citizenship, and/or;
3. (new - SG, issue 21 of 2021, amended - SG, issue 26 of 2022) has not notified of a change under Art. 32a.
4. (new - SG, issue 16 of 2013, previous item 3, supplemented - SG, issue 21 of 2021, repealed - SG, issue 26 of 2022)

(2) (Supplemented - SG, No. 11 of 2012, amended - SG, No. 103 of 2016, supplemented - SG, No. 21 of 2021) The revocation of naturalization is admissible only until the expiration of 10 years from the acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship, except in cases where the data and facts under para. 1, items 1 and 2 or the change under item 3 relate to the person's participation in terrorism, and provided that the person does not remain stateless.



**Art. 23.** The cancellation of the naturalization of one spouse does not cancel the naturalization of the other spouse and the children, unless they have obtained Bulgarian citizenship on the basis of the same false or concealed data or facts.

### **Section III. Deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship**



**Article 24.** A person who has acquired Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization may be deprived of it if he has been convicted by a final judgment of a serious crime against the republic, provided that he is abroad and does not remain stateless.



**Art. 25.** Deprivation of citizenship of one spouse does not change the citizenship of the other spouse and the children.

## **Chapter Four. RESTORATION OF BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**



**Art. 26.** (1) The citizenship of a person deprived of Bulgarian citizenship may be restored upon his/her request if:

1. has not been convicted of an intentional crime in the country in which he/she resides or in the Republic of Bulgaria, and
2. does not pose a threat to public order, public morals, public health or national security;
3. (new - SG, issue 41 of 2001, supplemented - SG, issue 21 of 2012) no less than 3 years ago as of the date of submission of the application for restoration has a permit for permanent or long-term residence in the Republic of Bulgaria.

(2) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The citizenship of persons of Bulgarian origin may be restored under the conditions of para. 1, items 1 and 2.



**Article 27.** The citizenship of a person deprived of Bulgarian citizenship may be restored if it is established that there was no ground for deprivation or if the ground has lost its significance.



**Art. 28.** (1) Upon restoration of the Bulgarian citizenship of the parents, their children under the age of 14 shall also become Bulgarian citizens. Children from 14 to 18 years of age shall become Bulgarian citizens if they have also requested this.

(2) When the restoration is requested by only one parent, the children may acquire Bulgarian citizenship under the conditions of para. 1 only if the other parent has also given his consent. The consent of the parent shall not be required when he is deprived of parental rights.

## **Chapter Five. PROCEEDINGS RELATING TO BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**



**Art. 29.** (Amended - SG, No. 33/2010) (1) Acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization, release from Bulgarian citizenship and restoration of Bulgarian citizenship shall be carried out upon application of the interested person, submitted in person to the Ministry of Justice or to the diplomatic or consular mission of the Republic of Bulgaria. The diplomatic or consular mission of the Republic of Bulgaria shall necessarily provide a reasoned opinion on the application.

(2) For minors, the application shall be submitted by their parents or guardians, and for minors, it shall be countersigned by their parents or guardians. The consent of a parent who is deprived of parental rights shall not be required.

(3) When submitting the documents, an interview shall be conducted with the applicant. For minors, the interview shall be conducted with their parents or guardians. When conducting an interview with minors, they shall be accompanied by their parents or guardians.

(4) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) When it is necessary to clarify facts and circumstances regarding the documents submitted with the application under Art. 15, para. 2, the Minister of Justice may require

the applicant to submit additional documents within 14 days of notification or assign the Consultative Council at the State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad to establish whether the applicant is of Bulgarian origin.

(5) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) When the application for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization under Art. 15, para. 1, item 1 is not accompanied by the documents under Art. 15, para. 2, the proceedings shall be terminated.

(6) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) The Advisory Board shall issue a reasoned positive or negative opinion within two months of the assignment, taking into account whether the applicant uses the Bulgarian language, whether he/she identifies himself/herself as a person of Bulgarian origin, as well as whether at least one of the following circumstances is present for him/her:

1. is part of a Bulgarian community or Bulgarian minority in another country;
2. originates from a settlement that was part of the Bulgarian state in the past or the Bulgarian Exarchate;
3. there are ascendants who are bearers of the traditional Bulgarian family name system.

(7) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) The structure, organization and activities of the Consultative Council at the State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad shall be determined by regulations adopted by the Council of Ministers.



**Art. 30.** (1) (Previous text of Art. 30 - SG, issue 21 of 2021) A proposal for the acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship under Art. 16 shall be made by the minister responsible for the relevant area in which the Republic of Bulgaria has an interest in the naturalization of the person or in which he has special merits. The person who will acquire Bulgarian citizenship must have given prior written consent to this.

(2) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) The proposal under paragraph 1 shall be motivated and shall indicate the specific interest of the Republic of Bulgaria in the naturalization of the person or his specific contribution in the relevant field in which the person has special merits.



**Art. 31.** (1) A proposal for the revocation of naturalization or for the deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship shall be made by the Prosecutor General.

(2) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) If the conditions under Article 22 or 24 are met, the Minister of Justice may himself make a proposal for the revocation of naturalization or for the deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship.



**Art. 32.** (1) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The application and the proposals under Art. 29, 30 and Art. 31, para. 1 shall be addressed to the Minister of Justice.

(2) (Repealed - SG, issue 33 of 2010)

(3) The application and the documents attached to it must be written in Bulgarian.



**Art. 32a.** (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) (1) The person under Art. 29, para. 1 shall be obliged, within one month of the occurrence of the change in the facts and circumstances related to the acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization, release from Bulgarian citizenship or restoration of Bulgarian citizenship, to notify the Ministry of Justice and submit the documents proving the change.

(2) (Repealed - SG, issue 26 of 2022)



**Art. 33.** (1) (Amended - SG, No. 41 of 2001, supplemented - SG, No. 109 of 2007, effective 01.01.2008, amended - SG, No. 33 of 2010, amended - SG, No. 66 of 2013, effective 26.07.2013, amended - SG, No. 98 of 2014, effective 28.11.2014, amended - SG, No. 21 of 2021, amended - SG, No. 22 of 2022, effective 18.03.2022) There shall be a Council on Citizenship under the Ministry of Justice, which shall consist of a Chairman - Deputy Minister of Justice, and members - one representative each of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Innovation and Growth, the State Agency for National Security, the State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad and the State Agency for Refugees.

(2) A representative of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria may attend the meetings of the Citizenship Council.

(3) (Supplemented - SG, issue 109 of 2007, effective 01.01.2008, amended - SG, issue 33 of 2010) The Citizenship Council shall give an opinion on the applications and proposals related to Bulgarian citizenship following written opinions of the Ministry of Interior and the State Agency "National Security".

(4) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021, amended - SG, issue 26 of 2022) When it is necessary to clarify facts and circumstances related to the evidence submitted in the applications and proposals or to the circumstances under Art. 19 , the Citizenship Council may require the applicants to submit additional documents or assign the representative of the relevant institution under Para. 1 to conduct an inspection. The deadline for submitting the documents and conducting the inspection is three months, and in the cases under Art. 16 - one month. In this case, the deadlines under Art. 35, Para. 1 shall cease to run.

(5) (Amended - SG, No. 41/2001, previous para. 4 - SG, No. 21/2021) The Minister of Justice shall determine the nominal composition of the Citizenship Council upon proposal of the heads of the relevant departments under para. 1 and shall issue regulations for its activities.



**Art. 34.** (Amended - SG, No. 41 of 2001) The Minister of Justice, based on the opinion of the Citizenship Council, shall make a proposal to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for the issuance of a decree or for the refusal to issue a decree for the acquisition, restoration, release or deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship, as well as for the cancellation of naturalization.



**Art. 35.** (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001, amended - SG, issue 33 of 2010) (1) The Minister of Justice shall make a proposal for issuing the decree under Art. 34 within:

1. (amended - SG, issue 21 of 2021) twelve months - for applications for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization;
  2. (amended - SG, issue 21 of 2021) nine months - on applications of persons of Bulgarian origin for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization;
  3. six months - for applications for restoration of Bulgarian citizenship;
  4. six months - for applications for release from Bulgarian citizenship;
  5. (new - SG, issue 16 of 2013, repealed - SG, issue 26 of 2022)
  6. (previous item 5 - SG, issue 16 of 2013) three months - on proposals for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship under Article 16 , as well as for cancellation of naturalization or for deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship;
  7. (new - SG, issue 103 of 2016) one month - on proposals for revocation of naturalization or for deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship, when the data and facts under Art. 22, para. 1, items 1 and 2 refer to the person's participation in terrorism or the sentence that has entered into force is for crimes under Art. 108a, para. 1 - 4, para. 6 and 7 , Art. 109, para. 3 , Art. 110, para. 1, proposal six and under Art. 110, para. 2 of the Criminal Code .
- (2) The terms under paragraph 1 shall run from the date of receipt of the application or proposal by the Ministry of Justice, respectively from the date of elimination of the irregularities.
- (3) The opinions of the Ministry of Interior and the State Agency "National Security" shall be submitted to the Ministry of Justice:
1. (amended - SG, issue 21 of 2021) under para. 1, item 1 - no later than three months before the expiration of the term - for the Ministry of Interior, respectively three months before the expiration of the term - for the State Agency "National Security";
  2. (amended - SG, issue 21 of 2021) under para. 1, item 2 - no later than three months before the expiration of the term - for the Ministry of Interior, respectively three months before the expiration of the term - for the State Agency "National Security";
  3. under para. 1, item 3 - no later than four months before the expiration of the term - for the Ministry of Interior, respectively two months before the expiration of the term - for the State Agency "National Security";
  4. (new - SG, issue 16 of 2013) under para. 1, item 5 - no later than 4 months before the expiration of the term - for the Ministry of Interior, respectively two months before the expiration of the term - for the State Agency "National Security";
  5. (previous item 4, amended - SG, issue 16 of 2013) under paragraph 1, item 6 - no later than two months before the expiration of the term - for the Ministry of Interior, respectively one month before the expiration of the term - for the State Agency "National Security";
  6. (new - SG, issue 103 of 2016) under para. 1, item 7 - no later than 20 days before the expiration of the term - for the Ministry of Interior, respectively 10 days before the expiration of the term - for the State Agency "National Security".
- (4) (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) The Ministry of Interior and the State Agency "National Security" shall submit updated opinions to the Ministry of Justice no later than the day of the meeting of the



Citizenship Council, when a change in the facts and circumstances has occurred after expressing their initial written opinions.

(5) (New - SG, issue 77 of 2018, effective 01.01.2019, previous para. 4 - SG, issue 21 of 2021) The failure of the Minister of Justice to issue a ruling within the time limits under para. 1 and the termination of the proceedings before him shall be subject to appeal before the Administrative Court - Sofia District under the procedure of the Administrative Procedure Code . The court shall only review the progress of the proceedings and shall issue a ruling, which shall be final.



**Article 36.** The acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization, the restoration of Bulgarian citizenship, the release and deprivation of citizenship and the cancellation of naturalization shall be carried out by a decree of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria. The decree shall enter into force on the day of its issuance.



**Art. 37.** (1) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The Ministry of Justice shall issue a certificate for changes in the citizenship of persons.

(2) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) After receiving the decree under Article 36, the Ministry of Justice shall notify:

1. (new - SG, issue 33 of 2010) the municipalities or town halls where the person's birth certificate is kept - for entering changes in citizenship in the civil status register;
2. (previous item 1, amended - SG, issue 33 of 2010) the municipalities or town halls where the person's permanent address is - for entering changes in citizenship in the population register;
3. (amended - SG, issue 82 of 2009, previous item 2 - SG, issue 33 of 2010) The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - for issuing or confiscating Bulgarian personal documents.



**Art. 38.** (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The Ministry of Justice shall keep:

1. a diary of applications and proposals for the acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship, for the revocation of naturalization, for the restoration, for the release and for the deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship;
2. register of persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization;
3. register of persons who have lost Bulgarian citizenship;
4. register of persons with restored Bulgarian citizenship.



**Art. 38a.** (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) The State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad shall create and maintain an electronic register with data of the persons for whom the Consultative Council has established Bulgarian origin. The procedure for maintaining, storing and accessing the register shall be determined by an ordinance of the Council of Ministers.



**Art. 39.** (1) (Amended - SG, No. 41/2001, amended and supplemented - SG, No. 21/2021) Upon application by the interested person, the Ministry of Justice shall issue a certificate of citizenship, stating whether the person is or is not a Bulgarian citizen according to the registers kept by the Ministry. The certificate shall be issued within 30 days of the receipt of the documents by the Ministry of Justice.

(2) The certificate under paragraph 1 shall be valid for 1 year from its issuance.



**Article 40.** (1) Information on the citizenship of persons may be requested by:

1. the person whose citizenship data are stored, and after his death - his heirs;
2. the bodies of the judiciary, the ministries and the bodies of local self-government and local administration within the framework of their competence and in the cases determined by law.

(2) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The Minister of Justice shall ensure the protection and storage of documents related to citizenship.





**Art. 41.** (1) (Amended - SG, No. 41 of 2001, previous text of Art. 41 - SG, No. 33 of 2010) The departments, municipalities and mayoralties shall be obliged to provide the Ministry of Justice, upon request, with data or opinions in connection with the proceedings on Bulgarian citizenship.  
(2) (New - SG, issue 33 of 2010, amended - SG, issue 66 of 2013, effective 26.07.2013, amended - SG, issue 98 of 2014, effective 28.11.2014) The Ministry of Justice shall have the right to free access to the National Population Database maintained by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works. The procedure, manner and scope of the data to which access is granted shall be determined by an agreement between the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Ministry of Justice.

### **Additional provisions**

§ 1. In the event of a disagreement between the parents, as well as in the event of a disagreement between the minors and their parents or guardians in the cases under Articles 18 , 21, 28 and 29 , the dispute shall be resolved by the district court, whose decision shall be final.

§ 2. For the purposes of this law:

1. " Person of Bulgarian origin " is a person of whom at least one ascendant is Bulgarian.
2. " Person permanently residing abroad " is a person who resides outside the Republic of Bulgaria for more than nine months in each calendar year, unless the residence abroad is in the performance of a civil service by the person or his/her spouse or is related only to training.
3. (new - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The person has renounced his previous citizenship when:
  1. is released at his request under the conditions and in accordance with the procedure of his domestic law;
  2. loses his citizenship by virtue of naturalization according to his domestic law.

### **Transitional and Final Provisions**

§ 3. With the entry into force of this law, the Bulgarian citizenship of persons who were deprived of Bulgarian citizenship under the Bulgarian Citizenship Act of 1940 and the Bulgarian Citizenship Act of 1948 shall be restored.

§ 4. (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) Bulgarian citizenship shall be restored to Bulgarian citizens who have been released from Bulgarian citizenship without having made a request for this, and who have emigrated to countries with which Bulgaria has not concluded emigration agreements, if they make a formal request to the Minister of Justice within one year from the entry into force of this law. When the persons live abroad, the requests may be made through the diplomatic or consular representations of the Republic of Bulgaria.

§ 5. Applications submitted before the entry into force of this law shall be considered and decided under the previous conditions and according to the previous procedure.

§ 5a. (New - SG, issue 21 of 2021) Citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland who have submitted applications for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by 31 December 2020 shall enjoy the rights of citizens of a Member State of the European Union, under Art. 12, para. 2, item 2 .

§ 6. This law repeals the Bulgarian Citizenship Law (promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 79 of 1968; amended in No. 36 of 1979, No. 64 of 1986 and No. 38 of 1989).

§ 7. (1) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The Minister of Justice shall issue an ordinance for the implementation of Chapter Five .

(2) Fees shall be collected for the actions performed and documents issued in the proceedings in relation to Bulgarian citizenship in amounts determined by a tariff of the Council of Ministers.

§ 8. (1) This law shall enter into force 3 months after its promulgation in the " State Gazette ".  
(2) (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) Within the term under paragraph 1, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Education and Science shall issue the acts on the implementation of the law.

§ 9. (Amended - SG, issue 41 of 2001) The implementation of the law shall be assigned to the Minister of Justice.

-----  
The law was adopted by the XXXVIII National Assembly on November 5, 1998 and was sealed with the official seal of the National Assembly.

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW ON THE STATE AGENCY "NATIONAL SECURITY"**

(PROMISED IN SG, NO. 109 OF 2007, IN FORCE AS OF 01.01.2008)

§ 44. The law shall enter into force on January 1, 2008.

**Final provisions  
TO THE ACT AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT ON  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

(PROMISED IN SG, NO. 74 OF 2009, IN FORCE AS OF 15.09.2009)

§ 48. The Act shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the " State Gazette ", with the exception of § 1 , which shall enter into force on September 15, 2009, and § 47 , which shall enter into force on October 1, 2009.

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON  
BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**

(PROMOTED - SG, No. 33 OF 2010)

§ 8. Applications submitted before the entry into force of this law shall be considered and decided under the current conditions and procedure within two years from the entry into force of this law.

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW ON AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON  
TERRITORIAL PLANNING**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 66 OF 2013, IN FORCE FROM 26.07.2013)

§ 95. In the Bulgarian Citizenship Act (promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 136 of 1998; amended in No. 41 of 2001, No. 54 of 2002, No. 52 and 109 of 2007, No. 74 and 82 of 2009, No. 33 of 2010, No. 11 and 21 of 2012, No. 16 of 2013) the words "Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works" shall be replaced throughout with "Ministry of Regional Development".  
.....

§ 117. The law shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the " State Gazette ".

**Final provisions  
TO THE LAW AMENDMENT OF THE YOUTH LAW**

(PROMISED - SG, NO. 68 OF 2013, IN FORCE FROM 02.08.2013)

§ 55. The law shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the " State Gazette ".

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON  
FOREIGNERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**

(PROMOTED - SG, No. 108 OF 2013)

§ 4. This law shall also apply to applications for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship by naturalization submitted before its entry into force.

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW ON AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON  
TERRITORIAL PLANNING**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 98 OF 2014, IN FORCE FROM 28.11.2014)

§ 94. In the Bulgarian Citizenship Act (promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 136 of 1998; amended in No. 41 of 2001, No. 54 of 2002, No. 52 and 109 of 2007, No. 74 and 82 of 2009, No. 33 of 2010, No. 11 and 21 of 2012, No. 16, 66, 68 and 108 of 2013) the words "Ministry of Regional Development" shall be replaced throughout with "Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works"  
.....

§ 117. The law shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the " State Gazette ".

**Final provisions  
TO THE ACT AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT ON THE  
COMMERCIAL REGISTER**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 22 OF 2015, IN FORCE FROM 24.03.2015)

§ 16. The Act shall enter into force on January 1, 2017, with the exception of § 3 , § 6, items 1, 3 - 6 , § 8 , 14 and 15 , which shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the "State Gazette".

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW ON AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE  
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE CODE**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 77 OF 2018, IN FORCE FROM 01.01.2019)

§ 156. The law shall enter into force on January 1, 2019, with the exception of:  
1. paragraphs 4 , 11 , 14 , 16 , 20 , 30 , 31 , 74 and § 105, item 1 regarding the first sentence and item 2, which shall enter into force on October 10, 2019;  
2. paragraphs 38 and 77 , which shall enter into force two months after the promulgation of this law in the "State Gazette";  
3. paragraph 79, items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 , § 150 and 153 , which shall enter into force on the day of the promulgation of this law in the "State Gazette".

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON  
BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 21 OF 2021)

§ 13. Applications submitted before the entry into force of this law shall be considered and decided under the current conditions and procedure, with the exception of the requirements of Art. 22 , Art. 32a and Art. 35, para. 4 , which shall also apply to pending proceedings in relation to Bulgarian citizenship.

§ 14. (1) A person who, until the entry into force of this Act , has received a permanent residence permit in the Republic of Bulgaria on the basis of Art. 25, para. 1, items 6 and 7 of the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria in accordance with the provisions of the law in force at the time of the application, has the right to submit an application for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship, if he meets the conditions under Art. 12, para. 1, items 1, 2, 3 and 4 and provided that the application made by him has been maintained for a period of not less than 5 years.

(2) The family members of a person under para. 1 have the right to submit applications for acquisition of Bulgarian citizenship if they meet the conditions under Art. 12, para. 1, items 2, 3 and 4 and the person under para. 1 has acquired Bulgarian citizenship.

§ 15. Within three months of the entry into force of this law, the electronic register under Article 38a shall be created .

§ 16. Within 6 months of the creation of the electronic register under Art. 38a, all data of applicants who have submitted applications to the State Agency for Bulgarians Abroad in the period from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020 shall be entered.

§ 17. Within 6 months from the entry into force of this law:

1. The Council of Ministers:

a) adopt the regulations under Art. 29, para. 7 and the ordinance under Art. 38a ;

b) bring the structural regulations adopted by it into compliance with this law ;

2. the ministers and chairmen of state agencies shall bring into compliance with it the acts related to its implementation, as well as the councils established by them that do not meet the requirements of this law ;

3. the Minister of Economy shall issue the ordinance under Art. 14a, para. 4 .

.....

**Final provisions  
TO THE LAW AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON  
INVESTMENT PROMOTION**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 22 OF 2022, IN FORCE FROM 18.03.2022)

§ 6. In the Bulgarian Citizenship Act (promulgated in the State Gazette, No. 136 of 1998; amended in No. 41 of 2001, No. 54 of 2002, No. 52 and 109 of 2007, No. 74 and 82 of 2009, No. 33 of 2010, No. 11 and 21 of 2012, No. 16, 66, 68 and 108 of 2013, No. 98 of 2014, No. 14 and 22 of 2015, No. 103 of 2016, No. 77 of 2018 and No. 21 of 2021) the words "The Ministry of of the Economy" and "the Minister of the Economy" are replaced by "the Ministry of Innovation and Growth" and "the Minister of Innovation and Growth", respectively.

.....

§ 8. The law shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the "State Gazette".

**Transitional and Final Provisions  
TO THE LAW AMENDING THE LAW ON BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP**

(PROMOTED - SG, NO. 26 OF 2022)

§ 7. Proceedings under the repealed Articles 12a and 14a that were not concluded until the entry into force of this law shall be terminated.

§ 8. (1) When Bulgarian citizenship is acquired by naturalization on the basis of the repealed Art. 12a or the repealed Art. 14a , the person who acquired it is obliged, within 14 days of the occurrence of the change in the facts and circumstances related to the investments that became the basis for naturalization, to notify the competent authority that certified the investments and to submit the documents proving the change.

(2) Naturalization on the basis of the repealed Art. 12a or the repealed Art. 14a may be revoked under the conditions of Chapter Three, Section II , as well as when the person who has acquired Bulgarian citizenship has not notified of a change under Para. 1 or has not maintained the investments that became grounds for acquiring Bulgarian citizenship for at least a two-year period, counting from the date of naturalization - in the cases under the repealed Art. 14a, Para. 1 , or for at least a one-year period - in the cases under the repealed Art. 12a, Para. 1 , and under the repealed Art. 14a, Para. 1, item 3 - and the jobs created.

(3) The Ministry of Justice shall send to the competent authority under para. 1 information regarding the persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship on the basis of the repealed Articles 12a and 14a . The competent authority under para. 1 shall notify the Minister of Justice of any established change in the investments leading to failure to fulfill the obligation to maintain them.

(4) In order to maintain the investments under para. 2, the competent authority under para. 1 shall exercise control after the end of the period under para. 2 and notify the Minister of Justice of the result, who may request information from the State Agency "National Security".

§ 9. (1) When Bulgarian citizenship is acquired by naturalization on the basis of the repealed Art. 12a or the repealed Art. 14a , the person who acquired it is obliged, within 14 days of the occurrence of the change in the facts and circumstances related to the investments that became the basis for naturalization, to notify the competent authority that certified the investments and to submit the documents proving the change.

(2) Naturalization on the basis of the repealed Art. 12a or the repealed Art. 14a may be revoked under the conditions of Chapter Three, Section II , as well as when the person who has acquired Bulgarian citizenship has not notified of a change under Para. 1 or has not maintained the investments that became grounds for acquiring Bulgarian citizenship for at least a two-year period, counting from the date of naturalization - in the cases under the repealed Art. 14a, Para. 1 , or for at least a one-year period - in the cases under the repealed Art. 12a, Para. 1 , and under the repealed Art. 14a, Para. 1, item 3 - and the jobs created.

(3) The Ministry of Justice shall send to the competent authority under para. 1 information regarding the persons who have acquired Bulgarian citizenship on the basis of the repealed Articles 12a and 14a . The competent authority under para. 1 shall notify the Minister of Justice of any established change in the investments leading to failure to fulfill the obligation to maintain them.

(4) In order to maintain the investments under para. 2, the competent authority under para. 1 shall exercise control after the end of the period under para. 2 and notify the Minister of Justice of the result, who may request information from the State Agency "National Security".