



**ACQUIRING PORTUGUESE NATIONALITY**  
*Naturalisation*

The citizenship law specifies various situations regarding acquisition of Portuguese citizenship. The Government grants Portuguese citizenship via naturalisation to foreign nationals who meet all of the following requirements:

- a) To have reached adulthood or being of age under Portuguese law;
- b) To have legally resided in Portuguese territory for at least 6 years with any type of resident permit except a short stay visa;
- c) To have a basic command of the Portuguese language;
- d) Not to have been found guilty, under a final and binding decision (*res judicata*), of a crime punishable with a maximum prison sentence equal to or greater than three years, under Portuguese law (e.g. murder, assault, theft, robbery, drug trafficking).

***What should I include in my request for citizenship?***

- a) Full name, date of birth, marital status, place of birth, citizenship, parental details, profession, current residence, details of countries previously resided in;
- b) Full name and residence of the legal representative (if the applicant is incapacitated) or the holder of the power of attorney.
- c) Details of the number, date and issuing body of the person's Residence Visa or similar document, passport or equivalent identification document of the applicant as well as their legal representative or the holder of the power of attorney;
- d) Applicant's signature, witnessed by a notary, except when written in the presence of a civil servant at one of the services or at an attendance centre with power to receive such requests. The form to apply for naturalisation may be obtained from the following website: <http://www.dgrn.mj.pt>



### ***Where should I submit my request?***

Those wishing to acquire Portuguese citizenship through naturalisation can submit their request at one of the following services:

- At the extension to the Central Registry Office, at the National Immigrant Support Centre or at the annex in *Alto dos Moinhos, Rua Augusto Pina, n° 21 r/c Loja A, Lisboa*, by filling in the appropriate application form. Documents and the application form may also be sent by post to the *Central Registry Office at Rua Rodrigo da Fonseca, n° 200, 1093-003 Lisboa*.

If you are sending your documents by post and payment is required, you should include a cheque or postal order payable in Portugal made out to the “*Conservatória dos Registos Centrais*” (the Central Registry Office) in order to carry out this payment.

- At any Civil Register Office;
- At a Portuguese Consulate (consular fees may be due).

The application can also be made by completing the relevant application form and posting it to the Central Registry Office or by lodging it in person at the CNAI.

### ***Which documents should I attach?***

Foreign nationals who are 18 years or older who have been resident in Portuguese territory for at least six years:

- a) A certified copy of the birth certificate (full birth certificate, if possible) and a translation, if not in Portuguese;
- b) Document proving sufficient knowledge of the Portuguese language (see the list of documents below);
- c) Criminal record certificates from the country of citizenship, as well as any countries where the person has been resident since the age of sixteen.



***Which documents do I need to show that I have sufficient knowledge of the Portuguese language?***

According with Decree-Law n° 43/2013 of 1 Abril, proof of knowledge of Portuguese may be established in one of the following ways:

- a) An educational certificate issued by a recognised official proving the successful completion of the level of education;
- b) A pass certificate in a diagnostic test held in a certified educational institution;
- c) A certificate of Portuguese as a foreign language, issued following a Level A2 test at a Portuguese as a Foreign Language evaluation centre recognised by the Ministry of Education. Test centres are available in Lisbon at the:

*Universidade Nova de Lisboa - Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas and the Faculdade de Letras.*

**For more details on the Portuguese Language Test, please consult euroFINESCO Short n° 69**

***What stages are involved in the naturalisation process?***

All requests should be forwarded to the Central Registry Office within 48 hours. The Central Registry Office must, within a period of 30 days, duly analyse the application.

If the request does not contain the necessary elements or does not include the required documentation to prove the facts forming the basis of the application, the Central Registry Office may reject the request. In this event, the applicant has 20 days to respond. After receiving the applicant's reply, or after a period of 20 days without a response, the Central Registry Office will issue its final decision.



If the request contains all the necessary elements and includes all the necessary documents, the Central Registry Office will ask the Foreign Nationals and Border Control Service (“SEF”) and the Portuguese Criminal Police (*Polícia Judiciária*) for information within a period of 30 days, which can be extend to 90 days when there is sufficient cause. After 45 days, the Central Registry Office will issue its decision concerning the feasibility of the request. If the decision is positive, the application will be sent to the Minister for Justice for the final decision. If the decision is negative, the applicant will be notified in order to be able to respond to this within a period of 20 days. After that period and after analysing the applicant’s reply (if there is a reply) the application is then sent to the Minister for Justice for the final decision.

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