



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Welcoming and Including New Communities project is co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 and is supported by the Department of Justice and Equality

Congratulations! You have received your status and are preparing to move out of Direct Provision. We in South West Mayo Development Company/Mayo Intercultural Action are delighted to have supported you on your journey. If you stay in Mayo, we can continue to support you, so keep in touch with us.

Preparing to apply for Irish citizenship by naturalisation

We are sure there are lots of things to plan and organise and thinking about a future citizenship application is not a priority. However, there are things you can start to do right now that will make it easier for you when you come to submit your citizenship application.

When can I apply?

Refugees are eligible to apply 3 years from the date of their arrival in the State. That means the time you spent in Direct Provision waiting for a decision on your application counts towards your residency.

For people with Statutory Protection and Leave to Remain, you may apply 5 years after the date of your first registration with the Gardaí National Immigration Bureau (GNIB). Your time spent in Direct Provision does not count towards your residency.

There is a Naturalisation Residency Calculator on the www.irishimmigration.ie website. Enter your registration dates and stamp types and it lets you know if you can apply.

Refugees do not have to complete a residency calculator.

Keep everything!

For each year of residency, you will need 3 documents with your name, address, and date on them to prove that you were living in Ireland. That is why you should **keep all correspondence and letters** and to keep them even if you move to a new house. It can be hard to go back and get this information 5 years later.

These documents include letters from government (tax, social welfare, Dept of Justice etc.), from state bodies (hospitals, driving licence agency, colleges etc.) and letters from private bodies (utility bills (electric, waste, broadband etc.), bank statements, car insurance etc.

Each spouse/partner should have their own documents, so where possible, you should put both names on electric bills, tenancy agreements etc.

Gaps in Residency

You must try not to have any gaps between your Irish Residence Permits (GNIB) – make sure to update your IRP regularly. Make sure to see your immigration officer 6 weeks before your IPR expires.

In the year before your application for citizenship you should not leave the country for more than 6 weeks in total. If you must go e.g., for medical treatment or because of a sick relative, you will need proof of this. Your excuse may or may not be acceptable.

Of course you can always wait till the following year to apply. There is no deadline by which you must apply.

Also, you cannot have any gaps in your residency card in the year immediately before your application.

What else should I do now?

The main website for information and application forms for citizenship is www.irishimmigration.ie

Things change from time to time. Check the website once a year to see if there are any new requirements.



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The current application form is located here:

[Application by a person of full age for naturalisation as an Irish citizen \(irishimmigration.ie\)](https://www.irishimmigration.ie)

Here is a link to the current information for citizenship applications for non-EU citizens. This may change in the future. <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/citizenship/become-an-irish-citizen-by-naturalisation/#Adult-Non-EU>

Birth Certificate

The only thing you will need from your home country is a birth certificate.

If it is not in English, you will need to get a certified translation. This can be done at any time, so you do not need to wait until you are applying for citizenship.

If you cannot get a birth certificate, when you apply you will need to complete an affidavit confirming your identity and saying why you cannot get a birth certificate.

Passport/Travel Document

Most people will need a valid in-date passport to apply, so it is important to apply for a renewal in plenty of time. If you have refugee status or subsidiary protection, you may use an Irish Travel Document. In this case, you must provide a sworn affidavit explaining why you do not have a passport. An Irish Travel Document takes at least 4 months to process.

What about my children?

- Once you have gained your Irish citizenship, you can apply for any minor (under 18) children who meet the residency criteria.
- The current form is Form 9. You can find it on www.irishimmigration.ie

'Good Character'

Not everyone can become an Irish citizen. The Minister for Justice decides.

One of the key things he considers when deciding to award someone citizenship is their 'good character.' This could include the person's criminal record, persistent motoring/insurance offences, any anti-social behaviour they have been involved with and each applicant will be vetted with the Gardaí.

What if my application is refused?

If your application is refused there is no appeal. You can apply again.

As we said above, if you are still living in Mayo you can keep in touch with us. We will be happy to help you with a range of issues, including your citizenship application when the time is right.

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