



BN18 - INFORMATION ABOUT DUAL NATIONALITY

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk



THE LAW IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

1. A person is a dual national if he or she holds more than one nationality or citizenship at the same time. There are *normally* no restrictions, in United Kingdom law, on British nationals having the citizenship of one or more other countries as well. So you will not need to give up any other nationality if you become British (but see paragraphs 2 - 4 below). Similarly, if you are a British national and you acquire another nationality, you will not *normally* lose your British nationality. However, special rules apply to British protected persons and certain British subjects (see Note 1).

THE LAWS OF OTHER COUNTRIES

2. Many other countries either restrict or do not allow dual nationality. So if you are a national of a country which restricts or does not allow dual nationality and you become a British national, the authorities of that country may either regard you as having lost that nationality or may refuse to recognise your new nationality. Therefore, if you are considering making an application to obtain British nationality and you are concerned that you may lose your existing citizenship, you should contact the Consulate or High Commission of the country whose nationality you already hold for further advice **before** you apply.

3. If you are a British national, and you want to obtain the nationality of a country which does not allow dual nationality, you may be required by the other country to renounce (give up) your British nationality.

4. If you have been a British national **and** the citizen of another country since you were born (e.g. a citizen of one country *by birth* and a citizen of another country *by descent*), you may be required by the other country, at some time (for example, when you reach a particular age), to renounce your British nationality in order to keep your other citizenship.

TRAVELLING ABROAD

5. Under international law, a State may not give consular assistance to one of its nationals if he or she is in a country whose citizenship that person also holds – i.e. if you are British and, for example, Chinese, the British representative in China cannot give you consular assistance whilst you are in China.

6. If you are planning to visit your former homeland, and you are not sure whether you have lost your old nationality, you should ask its Consulate or High Commission in the United Kingdom. If you have not lost the old nationality and want to give it up, they will be able to tell you what to do.

7. If you receive written confirmation that you have given up your old nationality, or no longer have it, you can get a letter from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office confirming that you will be given the same consular assistance which is provided to all British nationals when you are in your former country. You will need to send the original written confirmation, your British passport and original naturalisation/registration document to the following address:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Nationality and Consular Registration Section
Consular Directorate
Old Admiralty Building
London SW1A 2PA

8. Under the nationality laws of some countries, a married person automatically has his or her spouse's nationality (and children have a parent's nationality) wherever they were born. So this advice may also apply to your wife, husband or children if they are visiting the country of *your* nationality.

RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

9. British citizens (and certain Commonwealth citizens and British subjects) have the right of abode in the United Kingdom, and can live and work in the United Kingdom without restrictions. However, since 21 December 2006, a certificate of entitlement to the right of abode cannot be issued (and any current certificate of entitlement to the right of abode may be cancelled) if the person concerned has a passport or Identity Card which describes him or her as a British citizen or as a British subject with the right of abode.

RENUNCIATION

10. If you are a British citizen, a British overseas territories citizen (see Note 2 below), a British Overseas citizen, a British subject, a British National (Overseas) or a British protected person, you may renounce (give up) that citizenship or status if:

- you already have another citizenship or nationality; *or*
- you can show that you are going to get another citizenship or nationality after you have renounced your British nationality; **and**
- you are aged 18 or over (*or* have been married)*; **and**
- you are of full capacity (i.e. not of unsound mind)†

* If you are renouncing British protected person status, you must be at least 18 years old

† If you are not of full capacity, you may still be able to renounce British nationality if it would be in your best interests to do that

11. You can renounce your British nationality by filling in a declaration of renunciation. You will lose your British nationality on the date we register your declaration. However, if you do not already have another citizenship and do not get another citizenship within six months, the declaration does not take effect and we consider you to have kept your British nationality.

Please remember that:

- declarations of renunciation of British overseas territories citizenship (see Note 2 below) are registered by the Governor of the appropriate British overseas territory; **and**
- declarations of renunciation of British protected person status are registered by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

12. A declaration of renunciation should be made on Form RN1 (British citizenship, British Overseas citizenship or British subject status), Form RN2 (British overseas territories citizenship), or Form RN3 (British National (Overseas) status). If you want to renounce British protected person status, you should contact the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (see paragraph 7) or, if you are outside the United Kingdom, your nearest British Post abroad (see paragraph 14).

RESUMPTION

13. If you renounced your British citizenship or British overseas territories citizenship (see Note 2 below), you may have a right to resume (i.e. regain) the citizenship you renounced – but you can make use of this only once. If you have previously resumed one of these citizenships, and then renounced again, the Home Secretary (for British citizenship) or the Governor of the relevant British overseas territory (for British overseas territories citizenship) will decide whether you will be allowed to resume it again.

NB. You **cannot** resume British Overseas citizenship, or the statuses of British subject, British National (Overseas) or British protected person once you have renounced them.

ADDRESS FOR GENERAL ENQUIRIES, LEAFLETS AND APPLICATION FORMS

14. If you are in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, and have any questions about dual nationality or renouncing or resuming citizenship, please contact:

Home Office Department 2
Nationality Quality and Enquiry Team
Border and Immigration Agency
PO Box 306
Liverpool L2 0QN.

Telephone: 0845 010 5200

If you want to renounce or resume citizenship, you can get an application form and guide on our website or by telephoning 0117 344 1462.

If you have any questions about citizenship or renouncing or resuming citizenship, or want to ask for application forms (and you are not in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), please contact:

- the Lieutenant-Governor, if you are in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man
- the British Embassy or Consulate, if you are in a foreign country or the Republic of Ireland
- the British High Commission, if you are in a Commonwealth country
- the Governor, if you are in a British overseas territory

NB. Further information about British nationality and application forms for renunciation and resumption are also available on our website.

NOTES

1. If you are a British subject, you will lose that status automatically if you acquire any other nationality or citizenship (unless you are a British subject by connection with Ireland). If you are a British protected person, you will lose that status on acquiring any other nationality or citizenship.

2. Before 26 February 2002, British overseas territories citizenship was called British Dependent Territories citizenship.

The law covering British nationality is in the relevant Nationality Acts (mainly the British Nationality Act 1981) and the Regulations made under them. The information given here is only a brief guide to the law and to the Home Secretary's policy. It is not a complete statement of either the law or policy.