

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

This Law shall regulate the manner and the requirements for acquisition and loss of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, determination of citizenship, competent state body for resolving such cases, affirming citizenship and keeping records of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia.

The citizenship shall be a legal relationship between the persons and the state and shall not denote the ethnic origin of the persons.

Article 2

A citizen of the Republic of Macedonia can also hold a citizenship of another state.

A citizen of the Republic of Macedonia holding a citizenship of another state, in the Republic of Macedonia shall be considered exclusively as a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia, unless otherwise determined by an international agreement.

II. ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Article 3

The citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be acquired by:

- 1) origin,
- 2) birth on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia,
- 3) naturalization, and
- 4) international agreements.

1. By Origin

Article 4

A child shall acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by origin, provided that:

- 1) at the time of the child's birth, both parents are citizens of the Republic of Macedonia;

2. at the time of the child's birth, one of the parents is a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia and the child is born in the Republic of Macedonia, unless the parents have mutually agreed that the child shall acquire the citizenship of the other parent, and

3. at the time of the child's birth, one of the parents is a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia and the other parent is unknown or holds unknown citizenship, that is without a citizenship, and the child is born abroad.

An adopted child shall also acquire a citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by origin in the event of full adoption when both of the adoptive or one of the adoptive parents is a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 5

A child born abroad whose one parent at the time of the child's birth is a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia, and the other is a foreign citizen, shall acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by origin, provided that before reaching the age of 18 years the child is reported for registration as a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia, or if before reaching the age of 18 years the child has become, together with the parent who is a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia, a permanent resident of the Republic of Macedonia. In the case of a legal dispute over custody of the child, citizenship shall be acquired after the legal validity of the court's decision.

Under the conditions referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, a person that is not registered by both of the parents, having reached the age of 18, can acquire the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia provided that he/she submits a registration form for acquiring the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia before reaching the age of 23 years.

The registration form referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall be submitted to the body competent for keeping registers wherein additional child birth registration is performed or to the diplomatic and consular office of the Republic of Macedonia abroad.

A child acquiring citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, in terms of Article 4 of this Law and paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, shall be considered a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia from the moment of birth.

2. By Birth on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia

Article 6

Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be acquired by a child found or born on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia whose parents are unknown, or hold unknown citizenship or no citizenship.

The child referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall lose the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia if before reaching the age of 15 years it is determined that the child's parents are foreign citizens, and provided that the child shall not be left without a citizenship.

3. By Naturalization

Article 7

Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization can be acquired by a foreigner who has personally submitted a request for admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, provided that he/she meets the following requirements:

- 1) is at least 18 years of age;
- 2) until the submission of the request, legally and continuously resides on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia for at least 8 years;
- 3) has a housing and a permanent source of income in the amount enabling material and social security in accordance with the requirements determined by law;
- 4) has not been sentenced to imprisonment for at least one year in the Republic of Macedonia, or in the state whose citizen he/she is for crimes prosecuted *ex officio* which are punishable in accordance with the regulations in the Republic of Macedonia;
- 5) criminal procedure has not been initiated against him/her in the Republic of Macedonia and the state whose citizen he/she is;
- 6) has knowledge of the Macedonian language to the level that he/she can communicate with the environment;
- 7) is not sentenced a measure prohibition on residence in the Republic of Macedonia;
- 8) his/her admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia does not endanger the national security or defense of the Republic of Macedonia,
- 9) signs an oath to be a loyal citizen of the Republic of Macedonia, and
- 10) renounces the previous citizenship or proves that the renunciation shall be granted to him/her provided that he/she is admitted to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

The fulfillment of the requirement referred to in paragraph 1 item 6 of this Article shall be determined by a special commission established by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.

The requirement referred to in paragraph 1 point 10 of this Article shall be considered met if the foreigner proves that he/she is without a citizenship or if he/she proves that he/she shall lose the citizenship under the law of his/her country by the act of nationalization into the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

As an exception to paragraph 3 of this Article, provided that the foreign country does not give renunciation or in order to give renunciation it stipulates conditions that cannot be met by the foreigner, not causing existential or security problems for him/her and his/her family, he/she shall be accepted in the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, provided that he/she gives a statement that he/she renounces the foreign citizenship.

In the decision rejecting the request for admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization according to paragraph 1 point 8 of this Article, the body shall state the reasons due to which the decision has been adopted, taking into consideration the protection of the public interest.

Article 7-a

Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization can be acquired by a person without a citizenship or a person with a recognized refugee status, provided that within the period from the

determination that he/she has no citizenship, that is the recognition of refugee status to the submission of the application for admission to citizenship, he/she legally and permanently resides on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia for at least six years, has not been sentenced to imprisoned for at least one year in the Republic of Macedonia, for crimes prosecuted *ex officio* and are punishable in accordance with the regulations in the Republic of Macedonia, a criminal procedure is not initiated against him/her in the Republic of Macedonia and he/she meets the requirements referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 point 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of this Law.

Article 7-b

The content of the oath referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 point 9 of this Law shall state:

"I solemnly declare upon my honor that I will be loyal to the Republic of Macedonia and will respect the Constitution and the laws and will fulfill the obligations of a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia."

Article 7-c

A foreigner who has submitted a request for acceptance in the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be issued a guarantee that he/she shall be accepted in the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia provided that he/she meets the requirements referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 points 1 to 9 of this Law.

Provided that the foreigner referred to in paragraph 1 of this Law within a period of two years as of the day of handing in of the guarantee does not submit a proof in terms of Article 7 paragraph 1 point 10 of this Law, it shall be considered that he/she has withdrawn from his/her request.

Article 8

An emigrant from the Republic of Macedonia, as well as his/her descendants up to the first line can acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization although he/she does not meet the requirements referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 points 2 and 10 of this Law.

An emigrant, in terms of this Law, shall be a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia who moved out of the Republic of Macedonia in another country, except in the mother country, regardless of the sex, race, skin color, national and social background, political and religious conviction, property and social status.

Article 9

A foreigner that is married to a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia for at least three years and has a continuous stay on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia for at least one year up to the day of submission of the request, can acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization although he/she does not meet the requirements referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 points 2,6 and 10 of this Law.

A foreigner that is married to a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia for at least eight years, who legally and continuously lives abroad and has a firm and effective bond with the Republic of Macedonia, can acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization although he/she does not meet the requirements referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 points 2,6 and 10 of this Law.

Article 10

The request for admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, in terms of Article 8 of this Law, shall be rejected if following the loss of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by renouncing or in accordance with an international agreement, and the submission of the request for re-admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, have not passed at least three years.

Article 11

A foreigner who meets the requirements referred to in Article 7 paragraph 1 points 1 and 8 of this Law can acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization if this is of special scientific, economic, cultural, sports or other national interest.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia shall, by a decree, determine the criteria for special scientific, economic, cultural, sports and other national interest for the purpose of acquiring citizenship, in terms of paragraph 1 of this Article.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia shall give an opinion regarding the existence of the special interest in terms of paragraph 1 of this Article.

The marital partner of the foreigner referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article can also acquire citizenship by naturalization under the conditions referred to in Article 9 of this Law.

Article 12

Provided that both parents have acquired citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization, their child under 18 years of age shall also acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

Provided that one of the parents has acquired citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization, his/her child under 18 years of age shall also acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, if that parent has requested so, and the child lives in the Republic of Macedonia, or if both parents have requested this, regardless of where the child lives.

In the case of full adoption, if at least one of the adoptive parents has acquired citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization, citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization shall also be acquired by the adoptee who is under 18 years of age and who lives in the Republic of Macedonia together with the adoptive parent.

The child's consent shall also be necessary for the acquisition of citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, in terms of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this Article, provided that the child has reached the age of 15 years.

Article 13

The person shall acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia by naturalization as from the date of handing in of the decision for admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 14

The decision for admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia can be revoked following its handing in, provided that it is determined that the foreigner upon the submission of the request for admission to citizenship by naturalization, has given false or incorrect information, or has used forged documents.

The decision referred to in paragraph 1 shall be revoked within the period anticipated for time barring of the criminal prosecution for the crime referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

In the case referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the decision for admission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia of juveniles who have acquired citizenship simultaneously with their parents shall also be revoked, in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Article 15

A juvenile whose citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia has been lost by renunciation, can re-acquire citizenship if he/she has legally and continuously resided in the Republic of Macedonia for at least three years by the age of 25 years, and has submitted a request for readmission to citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

III. LOSS OF CITIZENSHIP

Article 16

The citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be lost:

1. by renouncing, and
2. in accordance with international agreements.

Article 17

Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be lost by renunciation, provided that the person who has submitted the request for renunciation, meets the following requirements:

- 1) is at least 18 years of age;
- 2) he/she has regulated all property relations towards the state bodies;
- 3) he/she has regulated all property relations and other legal obligations arising from the marital relation and the relation between parents and children towards persons living in the Republic of Macedonia;
- 4) he/she submits a proof from a competent body that a bankruptcy procedure is not initiated against him/her, that is a procedure for termination of a trade company whose owner or cooperator he/she is, that is a sole proprietor;
- 5) criminal procedure for a crime prosecuted has not been initiated against him/her or if sentenced to an imprisonment, he/she has served the sentence, and
- 6) he/she holds a foreign citizenship or has proved that he/she shall be given a foreign citizenship.

The competent state body shall refuse the request for renunciation of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, even in the case when the requirements referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article have been met, provided that reasons for security and defense of the Republic of Macedonia or the reasons for reciprocity or other reasons in regard to the foreign state require so.

The body shall explain the reasons upon which the decision refusing the request for renunciation from the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, in terms of paragraph 2 of this Article, has been adopted, taking into consideration the protection of the public interest.

The person shall lose the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia as from the day of handing in the decision for renunciation from the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 18

The decision for renunciation from citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be revoked if the person who has been granted renunciation has continued living in the Republic of Macedonia, that is has moved abroad and within a period of one year as of the day of handing the decision for renunciation has not acquired foreign citizenship.

A person who has been granted renunciation from citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, shall submit the request for revocation of the decision to the diplomatic and consular office of the Republic of Macedonia abroad or the competent state body in the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 19

Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia of a child under 18 years of age shall be lost upon a request of both parents whose citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia has been lost by renunciation or if citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia has been terminated in this manner for one of the parents, and the other parent has given consent to that.

Provided that the child's parents have been living separately, the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be lost for the child by renunciation upon a request by the parent with whom the child lives, that is the one to whom the child has been given to educate and raise, and who has submitted the request for renunciation of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, or in the case when the parent with whom the child lives is a foreigner. In both cases consent from the other parent shall be necessary.

The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall also apply to an adopted juvenile.

Provided that the other parent does not give consent to the child's renunciation from citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, the child shall be granted renunciation, provided that a consent for renunciation has been given by the responsible guardianship body bearing in mind child's interests.

Provided that the child has reached the age of 15 years, the child's consent shall also be necessary for the loss of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, in terms of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of this Article.

Article 20

Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia of an adopted juvenile being a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia, in the event of full adoption when the adoptive parents are foreign citizens, shall be lost by a renunciation upon a request of the adoptive parents.

Provided that adoptee has reached the age of 15 years, the adoptee's consent shall also be necessary for the loss of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, in terms of paragraph 1 of this Article.

IV. RESPONSIBLE STATE BODY FOR DETERMINING, KEEPING RECORDS AND AFFIRMING THE CITIZENSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Article 21

The request for acquisition, loss or determination of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be submitted to the Ministry of the Interior according to the place of residence of the person, or if the person lives abroad, to the diplomatic and consular office of the Republic of Macedonia abroad.

The decision regarding the acquisition, loss or determination of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be adopted by the Minister of the Interior.

The decision referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be submitted in accordance with the regulations on compulsory delivery in person.

The applicant can initiate administrative dispute against the decision referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article with the Administrative Court.

Article 22

The records of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia and foreign citizens born on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia shall be kept by the Ministry of the Interior.

The records of the acquisition and loss of citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be kept by the Ministry of the Interior, in accordance with the prescribed standards and in accordance with law.

Article 23

The citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be affirmed by a valid identity card or travel document.

The citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be also affirmed by a certificate for citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia issued by the Ministry of the Interior on the basis of the records in terms of Article 22 paragraph 1 of this Law.

Article 24

Provided that a person is not registered in the records of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Ministry of the Interior shall determine the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia and shall additionally record information in the records of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia. Provided that a person's birth is not registered, the information concerning the person's birth and citizenship shall be simultaneously registered in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Personal Identification Records.

Article 25

The responsible state bodies and organizations authorized by law to record citizenship information shall be notified in regard to the acquisition or loss of the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

V. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 26

A person who, in accordance with the present regulations, has held citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia shall be considered a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia in terms of this Law.

The procedures for acquisition or loss of citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia commenced before this Law has entered into force shall be concluded in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

The citizens of other republics of the former SFR Yugoslavia and the citizens of the former SFR Yugoslavia who have reported a place of residence in the territory of the Republic of Macedonia can acquire citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia provided that they have submitted a request within a year after this Law has entered into force, and provided that they have a permanent source of income, are adults and before the submission of the request they have been legally residing on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia for at least 15 years.

Article 27

The Minister of Interior shall adopt the by-laws for keeping records of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia living abroad, the form of the request for acquiring citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, the form of the guarantee for admission in the citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia and the form of the oath and the certificate's form for citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 27-a

The by-laws anticipated by this Law shall be adopted within a period of six months as of the day this Law enters into force.

Article 27-b

As of the day this Law starts to apply, the commenced procedures for acquisition or termination of a citizenship in the Republic of Macedonia in accordance with the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 97/93) shall continue in accordance with the provisions of this Law.

Article 28

The provision referred to in Article 23 paragraph 1 of this Act shall be applied following the replacement of identity cards and travel documents issued up until the day this Law enters into force.

Article 29

The by-laws anticipated by this Law shall be adopted within a period of six months as of the day this Law enters into force.

Until the adoption of the by-laws referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the existing by-laws shall apply unless they are contrary to the provisions of this Law.

Article 30

As of the day this Law enters into force, the Law on Citizenship of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia ("Official Gazette of SRM" no. 19/77) shall cease to be valid, and the Law on the Citizenship of the SFR Yugoslavia ("Official Gazette of SFRY" no. 58/76) shall not be applied on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 31

This Law shall enter into force on the eighth day of its publication in the "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia."