



KABINET VAN DE GOUVERNEUR VAN CURAÇAO



HOW TO BECOME A DUTCH CITIZEN?

THE PROCEDURE IN CURAÇAO

Table of contents

Disclaimer	3
1 Why this publication?	4
There are three ways to become a Dutch citizen	4
2 Becoming a Dutch citizen (general)	5
Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao	5
Immigration and Naturalization Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst – IND)	5
Requirements	5
Documents	6
Identity and nationality	6
Costs	6
Assessment	6
Duration of the procedure	6
Renouncing your current nationality	7
The naturalization ceremony	7
Take an oath or make a promise during the naturalization ceremony	7
The meaning of Dutch citizenship	8
Incorrect data and fraud	8
Loss of Dutch citizenship for other reasons than fraud	8
3 Becoming a Dutch citizen by means of option	9
Option possibilities	9
Gathering information	11
Procedure	11
Costs	11
Assessment of your option statement	11
Response to your option statement	11
4 Becoming a Dutch citizen through naturalization	12
Requirements	12
Gathering information	13
Procedure	13
Costs	13
Assessment of your application	13
Response to your application	13
5 Renouncing your current nationality/nationalities	14

6 Frequently asked questions	16
When can I apply for a Dutch passport?	16
What happens to my children's nationality when I become a Dutch citizen?	16
What are the rules for translation and legalization of foreign certificates?	16
How can I have my name determined or modified?	17
7 More information	18

Disclaimer

No rights can be derived from the contents of this brochure. Ultimately, the text of the Kingdom Act on Dutch Citizenship 2003 (*Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap 2003 – RWN*) and the Manual for the Implementation of the RWN, Focused on Use in Curaçao and Sint Maarten (*Handleiding voor toepassing van de RWN, toegespitst op het gebruik in Curaçao en Sint Maarten*) applies. This brochure provides general information on the option and naturalization procedures. Every situation is different. When you visit the walk-in consultation hours of the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao, based on your documents and the information you provide, an assessment is made if you are eligible for option or naturalization. Everyone may make an option statement or apply for naturalization. However, if the assessment shows that you are not eligible, you will be advised not to apply (negative advice). If you still wish to submit an option statement or application for naturalization, you will have to sign a statement which reads that you have been informed about the negative advice. You must pay the costs (dues) for option or naturalization before your option statement or application for naturalization is processed. These costs will not be reimbursed, irrespective of the outcome of the procedure.

1 Why this publication?

This publication is intended for all non-Dutch citizens who live in Curaçao and wish to become a Dutch citizen. In this brochure you will read about the requirements you will have to meet to become a Dutch citizen, the documents you need and the course of the procedure.

There are three ways to become a Dutch citizen

Automatic acquisition (by operation of law)

This usually happens at birth, upon recognition by a Dutch parent or by means of adoption. In these cases, the Dutch nationality does not have to be applied for.

By means of option

This procedure is intended for specific groups of people, for example:

- Persons who have been married to a Dutch citizen for at least three years, and who have been living in Curaçao based on a residence permit for at least 15 consecutive years.
- Persons who are 65 years of age or older and who have been living in Curaçao based on a residence permit for at least 15 consecutive years.
- Children of immigrants who live in Curaçao and were born here, as soon as they become adults. They must also possess a residence permit.

By means of naturalization

This procedure is intended for specific groups of people, for example:

- Persons who have been residing in Curaçao based on a residence permit for at least five consecutive years:
- Persons who have been residing in Curaçao based on a residence permit for at least three consecutive years and are married to and live with a Dutch citizen in Curaçao.
- Persons who at some point in time possessed the Dutch nationality.

In this publication, you will read more about option and naturalization.

For further information on the requirements to become a Dutch citizen, please consult the Kingdom Act on Dutch Citizenship 2003 and the Manual for the Implementation of the RWN 2003, focused on use in Curaçao and Sint Maarten.

2 Becoming a Dutch citizen (general)

If you wish to become a Dutch citizen, in case of option your case will be dealt with by the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao, and in case of naturalization, aside from the cabinet, also by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (*Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst – IND*) in the Netherlands.

Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao

If you believe you meet the requirements for option or naturalization, then you are welcome to visit the walk-in consultation hours of the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao. The consular officer of the cabinet will then assess with you whether you indeed meet the requirements. If you meet the requirements for option or naturalization, you can make an appointment to make an option statement or to apply for naturalization. The consular officer will help you to submit your application for naturalization or option. The Governor will decide on the option statement.

In case of naturalization, the Governor will draw up advice for the IND in the Netherlands, and will send that advice, along with your application for naturalization as a Dutch citizen, to the IND. The advice may be positive or negative, or the Governor may abstain from issuing advice. Keep in mind that the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao only advises. The decision will be made by the IND in the Netherlands.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (*Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst – IND*)

The IND in the Netherlands assesses your application for naturalization as a Dutch citizen and where necessary, it carries out additional investigation. The IND determines if you will be nominated to be granted the Dutch citizenship by His Majesty the King.

Requirements

Firstly, you must verify if you meet the requirements. Separate requirements apply in both the option procedure and the naturalization procedure. These are further elaborated in the chapters “Becoming a Dutch citizen by means of option” and “Becoming a Dutch citizen by means of naturalization” in this brochure.

In both procedures, the words “legally” and “uninterrupted residence” mean that from the day of your admission in Curaçao you have continuously possessed a valid residence permit. This means that you have always timely – meaning before the expiry of your residence permit – applied for an extension thereof. If your residence permit has been extended, then said residence permit must be granted immediately after expiry of the previous permit. There may be no interruptions in your admission. An interruption causes a so-called residence hiatus (*verblijfsgat*) and will lead to rejection of your application for naturalization and a refusal of the option confirmation.

For both procedures, the words “primary residence” refer to the place where a person actually lives. The primary residence is accredited by means of an extract from the Civil Registry of Curaçao. An

interruption in the primary residence due to a stay outside of Curaçao, will lead to rejection of your application for naturalization and a refusal of the option confirmation.

If you meet the requirements for option, you can make an option statement before the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao. If you meet the requirements for naturalization, you can submit an application for naturalization to the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao.

Documents

If you wish to apply for Dutch citizenship, you must submit several documents to the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao. Examples of such documents include your passport, residence permit(s), birth certificate, marriage certificate, proof of registry in the Civil Registry of Curaçao, etcetera. These documents must be submitted in their original version. If the documents were issued abroad, they must be legalized and, in some cases, translated by a sworn interpreter-translator.

Identity and nationality

To become a Dutch citizen, you must accredit your identity and nationality. If there is any reason to doubt the personal data or the nationality you stated, your application may be rejected solely for that reason.

Costs

Costs (dues) are associated with both the option and the naturalization procedure. When you submit the application for naturalization or make the option statement, you must immediately pay these costs. You will not find any additional information on the costs in this publication. If you want to know the costs beforehand, please consult the current rates at www.gouverneurcuracao.com*. You may also contact us (by phone). Your payment will not be reimbursed if your application for naturalization is rejected, your option statement is not confirmed, nor if you revoke your application for naturalization or option statement at a later time.

** The dues for option and naturalization applications are indexed annually.*

Assessment

The Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao handles the option procedure. The governor decides if you are granted Dutch citizenship. If you do not meet the option requirements, the governor will issue a decision in which they state why you are not eligible for Dutch citizenship. Pursuant to the National Ordinance on Administrative Justice (*Landsverordening Administratieve Rechtspraak* - LAR) you may raise objections against this decision with the governor or you may appeal the decision with the Court of First Instance of Curaçao. The procedure to do so is explained in the decision.

In case of naturalization, the governor compiles a file and sends this to the IND in the Netherlands accompanied by advice. The IND assesses your application. If the IND approves your application for naturalization, the IND submits a proposal to grant the Dutch citizenship for signature to His Majesty the King. If you do not meet the naturalization requirements, the IND will issue a decision in which they state why you are not eligible for Dutch citizenship. You may raise objections against this decision with the IND pursuant to the General Administrative Law Act (*Algemene wet bestuursrecht* - Awb). The procedure to do so is explained in the decision.

Duration of the procedure

If you make use of the option procedure, expect a term of approximately six months after the cabinet receives your statement for you to receive a decision. The naturalization procedure takes approximately one year. *Please note!* The decision term is extended if it turns out that you have to submit additional documents.

Renouncing your current nationality

Upon becoming a Dutch citizen by means of naturalization, as a general rule, you must renounce your current nationality/nationalities, which you must accredit by means of supporting documents. If you opt pursuant to Article 6, first paragraph sub e of the RWN, you will also have to renounce your current nationality. In chapter 5 of this brochure you will find more information on the procedure to renounce.

The naturalization ceremony

If your option statement has been confirmed or your application for naturalization has been approved, the governor will invite you to attend a naturalization ceremony. During the ceremony, consideration is given to the meaning of the Dutch nationality and your solidarity with the society of Curaçao, as part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Attending the naturalization ceremony is mandatory, and during the ceremony you must make the statement of solidarity. You will not become a Dutch citizen until after you have attended the naturalization ceremony, made the statement of solidarity and received confirmation of Dutch citizenship.

You are required to attend a naturalization ceremony within one (1) year after the decision. You will not become a Dutch citizen until after you have attended the ceremony, made the statement of solidarity and received the option confirmation or the naturalization decision. If you do not do so, the option confirmation or the naturalization decision will expire by operation of law. If you still wish to become a Dutch citizen, you will have to make another option statement or submit another application for naturalization. Only in very exceptional cases you will be excused from attending the naturalization ceremony. Examples of such cases include a physical or mental impossibility to attend the ceremony. If you believe your situation qualifies as such an exception, please contact us.

Minor optants or applicants for naturalization who at the time the option statement is made or the application for naturalization is submitted are 16 or 17 years of age, are also required to attend the naturalization ceremony and to make the statement of solidarity. Minor optants or applicants for naturalization under 16 years of age will not be invited to attend the naturalization ceremony, but may attend it if they wish to do so. Their parent or legal representative will be invited to appear and will also be required to attend. These minor optants or applicants for naturalization will only become Dutch citizens if their parent or legal representative attends the naturalization ceremony and makes the statement of solidarity.

Take an oath or make a promise during the naturalization ceremony

When the optant makes the option statement or submits the application for naturalization, the consular officer will inform them of the fact that there are two versions of the statement of solidarity. If the optant or the applicant for naturalization is religious, they may confirm the statement of solidarity by saying in Dutch: *'So help me God almighty'*. Otherwise, they opt for saying: *'This I affirm and promise'*.

If the optant or applicant for naturalization opts to confirm the statement of solidarity using the first option, the statement of solidarity will contain the following text in Dutch: 'I swear to respect the constitutional order of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, its freedoms and rights, and I swear to faithfully perform the duties associated with citizenship,' and it ends with the following confirmation in Dutch on the part of the optant or the applicant for naturalization: *'So help me God almighty'*.

If the optant or applicant for naturalization opts to pronounce the statement of solidarity using the second option, the statement of solidarity will contain the following text in Dutch: 'I affirm to respect the constitutional order of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, its freedoms and rights, and I promise to faithfully perform the duties associated with citizenship,' and it ends with the following confirmation in Dutch on the part of the optant or the applicant for naturalization: *'This I affirm and promise'*.

Please note! If you do not pronounce the statement of solidarity correctly in Dutch, you will not become a Dutch citizen. Therefore, practice the pronunciation of the version you choose beforehand.

The meaning of Dutch citizenship

Applying for Dutch citizenship is a big step. It is therefore recommended that you make sure you are fully informed about the consequences of Dutch citizenship. If your application for naturalization is approved or your option statement is confirmed, a number of things will change for you. The most important changes are:

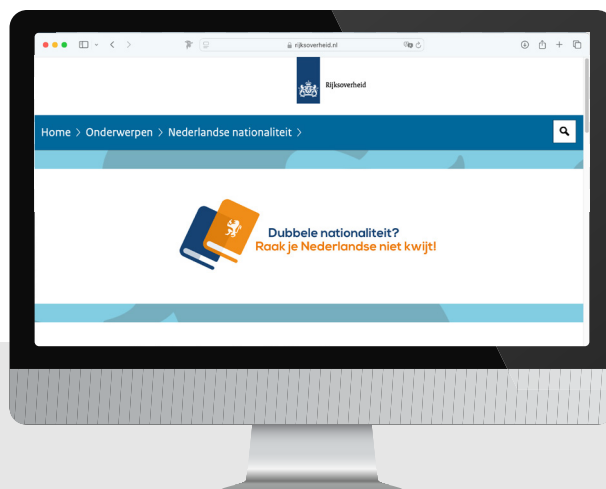
- You will be registered as a Dutch citizen in the population register. This may seem a formality, but it is very important; the population register forms the basis for all documentation, which includes the passport.
- You may apply for a Dutch passport. A Dutch passport in any case means you may travel freely to all countries within the European Union (EU). You may also travel to many other countries in the world without a visa.
- You are entitled to vote for the Curaçao Parliament.
- Your minor children will also become Dutch citizens. This only applies if you included your children in your application for naturalization or option statement. If your children are 12 years of age or older, they themselves must also state they wish to become Dutch citizens.
- You are no longer a foreigner. Your data in the registry of foreign nationals will be modified.
- As a general rule, upon becoming a Dutch citizen you will have to renounce your current nationality/nationalities. This does not apply if you belong to one of the exception categories. In chapter 5 of this brochure you will find more information on this subject.

Incorrect data and fraud

If it turns out that you consciously submitted incorrect data or committed fraud when obtaining the Dutch nationality by means of option or naturalization, the Dutch citizenship may be revoked. This may even happen up to 12 years after you obtained the Dutch nationality, even if this means you become a stateless citizen. The IND decides if your Dutch nationality will be revoked.

Loss of Dutch citizenship for other reasons than fraud

Please visit www.rijksoverheid.nl search term: “*Nederlandse nationaliteit verliezen*” (Losing the Dutch nationality) for more information on losing the Dutch nationality for other reasons than fraud.



3 Becoming a Dutch citizen by means of option

In a number of cases, you can become a Dutch citizen by making an option statement. In order to be considered for option, in almost all cases you must possess a valid residence permit. Furthermore, you must be willing to make the statement of solidarity during the naturalization ceremony and, if applicable, to renounce your original nationality/nationalities.

Option possibilities

- You are an adult (meaning you are 18 years of age or older), born as a child of parents who do not possess the Dutch nationality, since birth you have been living in Curaçao uninterruptedly, and you possess a residence permit for a non-temporary purpose (Article 6, first paragraph, sub a of the RWN).
- You were born in Curaçao, you have lived here uninterruptedly and legally for at least 3 years and since birth you have not possessed a nationality (you are a stateless citizen). You must submit evidence of the fact that you are a stateless citizen. Legally means: you possess a residence permit. The residence permit must have a non-temporary purpose (Article 6, first paragraph, sub b of the RWN).
- You are a minor, acknowledged by a Dutch citizen, who is not or has not become a Dutch citizen pursuant to Articles 3 or 4 of the RWN, and immediately prior to making the option statement, you have received care and upbringing from the Dutch citizen who acknowledged you for an uninterrupted period of at least three years (Article 6, first paragraph, sub c of the RWN).
- You are an adult and since having reached the age of 4 years, you have been living in Curaçao pursuant to a residence permit (Article 6, first paragraph, sub e of the RWN).
- You are an adult, a former Dutch citizen, and you have been living in Curaçao for at least 1 year pursuant to a residence permit for an indefinite period or a residence permit for a non-temporary purpose of residence (Article 6, first paragraph, sub f of the RWN).
- You have been married to a Dutch citizen for at least 3 years, and you have been living in Curaçao uninterruptedly for at least 15 years pursuant to a residence permit (Article 6, first paragraph, sub g of the RWN).
- You are at least 65 years of age, and you have been living in Curaçao uninterruptedly for at least 15 years pursuant to a residence permit (Article 6, first paragraph, sub h of the RWN).
- Before January 1st, 1985, you married a non-Dutch man, and therefore you lost the Dutch nationality. Within one year after said marriage is dissolved, you may regain Dutch citizenship by means of option. In this case, the requirement of residence in Curaçao pursuant to a residence permit does not apply.
- You were born prior to January 1st, 1985, from a mother who at the time of your birth was a Dutch citizen, while your father was not a Dutch citizen (Article 6, first paragraph, sub i of the RWN).
- Prior to January 1st, 1985, you were adopted in the Netherlands, the former Netherlands Antilles or Aruba pursuant to a court decision by a woman who was a Dutch citizen on the day the decision

entered into force. You were a minor on the day of the decision in First Instance (Article 6, first paragraph, sub j of the RWN).

- You were born as a child of a person who acquired Dutch citizenship. Said person meets the requirements of Article 6, first paragraph, sub i or j of the RWN, or the person passed away and prior to passing away, they met these requirements (Article 6, first paragraph, sub k of the RWN).
- Before reaching the age of 7, you were acknowledged by a person who acquired Dutch citizenship. Said person meets the requirements of Article 6, first paragraph, sub i or j of the RWN, or the person passed away and prior to passing away, they met these requirements (Article 6, first paragraph, sub l of the RWN).
- As a minor of 7 years of age or older, you were acknowledged by your biological father who acquired Dutch citizenship before you reached adult age. Your father meets the requirements of Article 6, first paragraph, sub i or j of the RWN, or your father passed away and prior to passing away, he met these requirements (Article 6, first paragraph, sub m of the RWN).
- Pursuant to legal determination of paternity, you are the child of a man who acquired Dutch citizenship. Your father meets the requirements of Article 6, first paragraph, sub i or j of the RWN, or your father passed away and prior to passing away, he met these requirements (Article 6, first paragraph, sub n of the RWN).
- Pursuant to a court decision made in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao or Sint Maarten, you are the adopted child of a man or woman who acquired Dutch citizenship. Said person meets the requirements of Article 6, first paragraph, sub i or j of the RWN, or the person passed away and prior to passing away, they met these requirements. You were a minor on the day of the decision in First Instance (Article 6, first paragraph, sub o of the RWN).
- You are a former Dutch citizen. You lost Dutch citizenship by operation of law. If said loss implied the loss of Union citizenship and the consequences thereof are disproportionate to you, then you may regain Dutch citizenship with retroactive effect. In such case, you are not required to make the statement of solidarity during the naturalization ceremony. The requirement of legal residence in Curaçao also does not apply to you (Article 6, first paragraph, sub p of the RWN).
- You are under the age of 21 and you were born in the Kingdom of the Netherlands (in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius or Saba). Since birth, you have been a stateless citizen. This means you do not have a nationality. It is not reasonably possible for you to obtain another nationality. Immediately prior to making the option statement, you have had a stable primary residence in the Kingdom for at least 5 uninterrupted years. Stable primary residence means you meet all 3 of the following requirements:
 - You have actually lived in Curaçao for at least 5 uninterrupted years.
 - You and your parents have always actively cooperated with the departure process.
 - You and your parents have always remained in view of the Dutch State (Article 6, first paragraph, sub q of the RWN).
- Lastly, there is a separate regulation for children who after April 1st, 2003 and prior to March 1st, 2009 have been acknowledged or legitimized by a Dutch citizen. For more information on these option possibilities, please contact the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao.

The following applies in the aforementioned cases:

- In the period of five years immediately prior to the time you make the option statement or the corresponding decision, you have not been in contact with the police and/or law enforcement.
- You may not be married to more than one man or woman at the same time.
- You must be entitled to residence for a non-temporary purpose and the entitlement to residence may not be interrupted.
- You must have a primary residence pursuant to your registry in the Civil Registry of Curaçao. Your primary residence may not be interrupted.

The period of admission (pursuant to a valid residence permit) and primary residence (registry in the Civil Registry) in other countries of the Kingdom may be included in the aforementioned period. In such case, the periods must be immediately consecutive. There may not have been any interruptions.

Gathering information

In comparison to the naturalization procedure, the option procedure is a shorter and less complicated manner to obtain the Dutch nationality. Contrary to naturalization, as a general rule, in case of option you must have had a longer period of uninterrupted admission and primary residence in Curaçao. Firstly, verify if you are eligible to become a Dutch citizen by means of option. Also verify if you must renounce your current nationality upon becoming a Dutch citizen.

Procedure

If you believe you meet the requirements for option, please contact us. The consular officer will ask you to bring several documents. Which documents these are, depends on your personal circumstances. You must make an option statement at the cabinet. You must also fill out and sign a statement in which you declare to be willing to make the statement of solidarity during the naturalization ceremony. If you opt pursuant to Article 6, first paragraph sub e of the RWN, you must sign a statement in which you declare you will renounce your current nationality. In chapter 5 of this brochure you will find more information on the procedure to renounce.

Costs

You have to pay the costs for the option procedure. The amount depends on the fact whether it concerns a single or joint request. You will also have to pay for minor children involved in your application. You will not find any additional information regarding the costs in this publication. If you want to know the costs beforehand, please consult www.gouverneurcuracao.com. You can also contact us.

Assessment of your option statement

When the consular officer has gathered all information, they carry out an investigation. They verify if your identity is sufficiently determined, if you have been in contact with police and/or law enforcement, they investigate your right of residence and if you had the required uninterrupted period of admission and primary residence.

Response to your option statement

There are two possible responses to the option statement you made.

1. Your option statement is confirmed, and the governor invites you to attend a naturalization ceremony. You will be granted the Dutch nationality if during the naturalization ceremony, after having made the statement of solidarity, you receive the option decision.
2. Your option statement is rejected. You will receive a letter explaining the reason why you cannot become a Dutch citizen. You may raise objections against this rejection with the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao. The procedure to do so is explained in the letter.

4 Becoming a Dutch citizen through naturalization

Requirements

- You are an adult (meaning you are 18 years of age or older). If you are younger than 18 years of age, you are an adult if you are married or have been married.
- You have been residing in Curaçao uninterruptedly and legally for at least 5 years with a valid residence permit. There are some exceptions to this rule:
 - You are married to or are the registered partner of a Dutch man or woman. In that case, after 3 years of marriage or registered partnership (possibly abroad) and uninterrupted cohabitation, you may submit an application for naturalization.
 - If you legally and uninterruptedly cohabit for 3 years (both partners unwed) with a Dutch partner (man or woman) you may also submit an application for naturalization. In case you cohabited without being married, such cohabitation must have taken place within the Kingdom. In case of marriage, the cohabitation may also have taken place abroad. Please note! From the moment your application has been submitted until a decision has been made regarding the application, you must continue living together.
 - You are a stateless citizen. Your Dutch nationality has not been revoked prior due to fraud. Instead of a period of 5 years of admission and primary residence, in your case a period of 3 years applies.
 - You are a former Dutch citizen; you had the Dutch nationality, and you lost it. In that case, you are not required to have lived a certain period of time in Curaçao. In some cases, you can make use of the option procedure. The consular officer can provide you with further information on this matter.
- You have a residence permit pursuant to which you may reside in Curaçao for an indefinite period of time, or you have a residence permit for a non-temporary purpose of residence. If you have a residence permit for a temporary purpose of residence, such as studies, you are not eligible for naturalization.
- You are sufficiently established in society, and you are able to speak, read, write and understand Dutch and Papiamentu. You must demonstrate this by submitting the Naturalization Exam Certificate which shows you passed the naturalization exam. If you have certain diplomas or certificates, it is possible you do not have to take the naturalization exam. You also do not have to take the naturalization exam in the following cases:
 - if investigation has shown that there is a medical or mental impediment which leaves you unable to take the naturalization exam within five years; or
 - if investigation has shown that for you, despite efforts made, it is not possible to pass the naturalization exam.
- No sanction related to an offense has been imposed on you or executed in the period of five years immediately prior to the application for naturalization or the corresponding decision.
- You are not married to more than one man or woman at the same time.
- You are willing to make the statement of solidarity during the naturalization ceremony. In doing so, you show that you are aware of the fact that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands also apply to you. If you do not pronounce the statement of solidarity, you cannot become a Dutch citizen.

- You are willing to renounce your current nationality/nationalities. In chapter 5 of this brochure you will find more information on the procedure to renounce.

Gathering information

Verify at the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao if you are eligible for Dutch citizenship by means of naturalization. Also verify if you must renounce your current nationality/nationalities upon becoming a Dutch citizen.

Procedure

If you believe you meet the requirements for naturalization, please contact us to make an appointment to submit the application for naturalization. The consular officer will ask you to bring several documents. Which documents these are depends on your personal circumstances. At the cabinet, you submit the required documents. With the help of the consular officer, you fill out the application for naturalization as a Dutch citizen and other forms if required.

You must also fill out and sign a statement in which you declare to be willing to make the statement of solidarity during the naturalization ceremony. Furthermore, if applicable, you must sign a statement in which you declare that you will renounce your current nationality. In chapter 5 of this brochure you will find more information on the procedure to renounce.

Costs

You have to pay the costs for the naturalization procedure. The amount depends on the fact whether it concerns a single or joint request. You will also have to pay for minor children included in your application for naturalization. The amount must be paid upon submission of the application for naturalization. You will not find any additional information regarding the costs in this publication. If you want to know the costs beforehand, please consult www.gouverneurcuracao.com. You can also contact us.

Assessment of your application

When the consular officer has gathered all information, they carry out an investigation. They verify if your identity is sufficiently determined, if you have been in contact with police and/or law enforcement, they investigate your right of residence and if you had the required uninterrupted period of admission and primary residence. The consular officer will then send your application for naturalization and all corresponding documents, along with the advice, to the IND in the Netherlands. The IND in the Netherlands decides on your application for naturalization.

If your application is approved, a proposal to grant the Dutch citizenship is submitted to His Majesty the King. The King eventually grants Dutch citizenship.

Response to your application

There are two possible responses to your application to become a Dutch citizen by means of naturalization.

1. Your application for naturalization is approved. Firstly, you will receive a proposal letter of the IND which shows that you have been nominated to be granted the Dutch citizenship by His Majesty the King. You will be granted Dutch citizenship by Royal Decree. Some time after, the governor will invite you to attend a naturalization ceremony. You will be granted the Dutch nationality if during the naturalization ceremony, after having made the statement of solidarity, you receive the naturalization decision.
2. Your application for naturalization is rejected. You will receive a letter explaining the reason why you cannot become a Dutch citizen. You may raise objections against this rejection with the IND in the Netherlands. The procedure to do so is explained in the letter.

5 Renouncing your current nationality/nationalities

If you wish to become a Dutch citizen, as a general rule, in case of naturalization you must renounce your current nationality/nationalities, unless there is an exception. In case of option, you must renounce your current nationality/nationalities if you make an option statement pursuant to Article 6, first paragraph, sub e of the RWN.

If you do not renounce your current nationality/nationalities after you become a Dutch citizen while your situation does require you to, your Dutch nationality may be revoked.

In some cases, your country of origin allows you to have several nationalities, or it does not permit you to renounce your current nationality/nationalities.

It may also be possible that you lose your current nationality/nationalities automatically upon becoming a Dutch citizen. Verify beforehand with the authorities of the country (or the countries) of which you currently hold the nationality, if automatic loss of nationality applies to you. In some cases, you are not required to renounce your current nationality. In such case, at the time you submit your application for naturalization, you must demonstrate that you are not required to renounce your nationality.

You are **not** required to renounce your current nationality/nationalities under among others the following circumstances:

- Legislation of the country of which you currently hold the nationality does not permit the loss of your nationality (on www.ind.nl you can verify for each country which regulations apply to renouncing the nationality), which means you cannot renounce.
- You are married to or are the registered partner of a Dutch citizen.
- You are a minor.
- You were born in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao or Sint Maarten and live here at the time you submit your application for naturalization.
- In order to renounce your current nationality, you are required to pay a large sum to the authorities of the country of your current nationality. You must be able to demonstrate this when you submit your application for naturalization.
- Renouncing your current nationality would lead to you losing certain rights, as a consequence of which you would suffer severe financial consequences, due to inheritance law matters, for example. You must be able to demonstrate this when you submit your application for naturalization.
- You are required to fulfill (or buy off) compulsory military service before being able to renounce your current nationality. You must be able to demonstrate this when you submit your application for naturalization.
- In accordance with legislation of the country of your current nationality, you may only renounce your current nationality after having completed the naturalization procedure. Whenever your naturalization is completed, you must still renounce your current nationality.
- You cannot be expected to contact the authorities of the state of your current nationality.

- You have an exceptional reason which leaves you unable to renounce your current nationality.
- You are a citizen of a state that the Netherlands does not recognize.
- You are a citizen of a state that is party to the Second Protocol of the Strasbourg Convention.
- You have been recognized as a refugee in the Netherlands, Curaçao, Sint Maarten or Aruba.

6 Frequently asked questions

Below are questions that are frequently asked to the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao, with their corresponding answers.

When can I apply for a Dutch passport?

You can apply for a Dutch passport (document) after having attended the naturalization ceremony, made the statement of solidarity and received the option confirmation or the announcement that the Dutch citizenship has been granted. The cabinet will inform the Public Affairs office (also known as Kranshi) about the fact that you have been granted the Dutch nationality. Please take into account that the Public Affairs office needs some time to modify your data in the Civil Registry. It is recommended you wait six weeks before making an appointment to apply for a passport. Verify at Kranshi which documents you should bring to your appointment.

What happens to my children's nationality when I become a Dutch citizen?

As a general rule, your minor children will also become Dutch citizens, provided you included them in your option statement or application for naturalization. Children over 12 years of age must also state themselves that they wish to become Dutch citizens. Furthermore, your children must possess a valid residence permit. Children between 12 and 16 years of age will be asked about their opinion about Dutch citizenship by an official of the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao. These children do not have to become Dutch citizens if both they themselves and one of their parents opposes Dutch citizenship. If only one of them (the child or a parent) opposes citizenship, the government decides. Children over 16 years of age decide for themselves if they wish to become Dutch citizens.

What are the rules for translation and legalization of foreign certificates?

The Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao must be able to read foreign certificates (birth certificates, marriage licenses, etcetera) and verify their authenticity. Therefore, the following rules apply:

- For *naturalization*: if a certificate is written in a language that is not Dutch, English, German or French, you must provide a translation of the document, preferably to Dutch. Such translation must be made by a sworn translator. If you have the document translated abroad, the translation must also be legalized.
- For *option*: if a certificate is written in a language that is not Dutch, English or German, you must provide a translation of the document, preferably to Dutch. Such translation must be made by a sworn translator. If you have the document translated abroad, the translation must also be legalized.
- The Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao may ask you to have the certificates legalized in the country in which they were issued. It will be checked if the certificate has been issued by the competent authority/authorities. Translation and legalization of documents may take several

months, and you must pay the costs yourself. Please contact us for more information on translation and legalization of documents. You can also read more on legalization of documents on www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl.

How can I have my name determined or modified?

It is possible that your name will have to be determined. Determination of your name is mandatory if you do not have a surname or first name (instead, you have only one name or several names where no distinction is made between surname and first name(s)). Furthermore, you may also request to have your surname changed. This is only possible in a limited number of cases, and only if it is relevant to your establishment in society, such as:

- Your name is difficult to pronounce for Dutch speakers.
- You were given your husband's last name through marriage, and you wish to change this to your maiden name.

7 More information

If you have any questions after having read this publication, please consult the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao.

Opening hours Consular Department:
Monday to Friday

Walk-in consultation hours:
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Telephone consultation hours:
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

☎ 0802 461 8555 (toll free) or
+5999 461 8555
@ consulair@kgcur.org

Submitting an application for naturalization or making an option statement is only possible by appointment. To make an appointment, please call the Consular Department on working days between 2:00 and 4:00 pm on the (toll free) number listed above.



General contact details of the
Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao

📍 Fort Amsterdam 2
Willemstad, Curaçao

☎ +5999 461 2000

@ kabinet@kgcur.org

www.gouverneurcuracao.com



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Processing of personal data

When handling your application, the Cabinet of the Governor of Curaçao will process personal data. This means that the cabinet will request you and, if necessary, other organizations or persons to submit data. Within the framework of the implementation of the Kingdom Act on Dutch Citizenship (*Rijkswet op het Nederlandschap - RWN*), the cabinet uses and stores data and forwards these to other organizations involved in the option and naturalization procedures. The cabinet will handle your personal data carefully and safely.

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Sources:

- IND Brochure: 3005-2024/2 *Hoekunt u Nederlander worden? De procedure op Aruba, Curaçao en Sint Maarten* (How to become a Dutch citizen? The procedure in Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten)
- *Handleiding voor de toepassing van de Rijkswet op het Nederlandschap 2003 toegespitst op het gebruik in Curaçao en Sint Maarten* (Manual for the Implementation of the Kingdom Act on Dutch Citizenship, Focused on Use in Curaçao and Sint Maarten)
- *Rijkswet op het Nederlandschap 2003* (Kingdom Act on Dutch Citizenship 2003)
- Website of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (*Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst*): www.ind.nl