

Translation from Finnish

Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish

Ministry of the Interior, Finland

Citizenship Act

(359/2003, amendments up to 552/2026 included)

By decision of Parliament, the following is enacted:

Chapter 1

General provisions

Section 1

Objectives and scope of the Act

This Act lays down provisions on the requirements for the acquisition, retention and loss of Finnish citizenship and on the procedure for considering such matters.

The objectives of this Act are to regulate the acquisition and loss of Finnish citizenship taking account of the interests of both individuals and the State, to prevent and reduce statelessness and to implement and promote the principles of good governance and legal protection when considering and making decisions on matters of citizenship.

Section 2

Definitions

In this Act:

1) citizenship means a legislative bond between an individual and the State establishing the individual's status in the State as well as the key rights and obligations between the individual and the State;

2) alien means a person who is not a Finnish citizen;

3) *stateless* means a person who is not considered to be a national by any state under the operation of its law; (474/2024)

Paragraph 4 was repealed by Act 474/2024.

5) *person with unknown citizenship* means a person for whom there is no information on citizenship or statelessness;

6) *citizenship status* means present or former citizenship, statelessness or citizenship being unknown;

7) *child* means a person who is under 18 years of age; (929/2025)

8) *spouse* means the married spouse of the person concerned or a person living in marriage-like circumstances with the person concerned; provisions on a spouse also apply to a person living with the person concerned in a relationship in accordance with the Act on Registered Partnerships (950/2001);

9) *applicant* means a person who has made an application or declaration for the acquisition of or release from Finnish citizenship, or on whose behalf a person who has custody of the child (custodian) or a guardian has made such an application or declaration; and

10) *co-applicant* means a child in the custody of the applicant for whom the applicant wishes to acquire or be released from Finnish citizenship on an application or by a declaration linked to the applicant's application or declaration. (579/2011)

Section 3 (974/2007)

Duties of the Finnish Immigration Service

Decisions on the acquisition, retention and loss of Finnish citizenship and on the determination of citizenship status under this Act are made by the Finnish Immigration Service.

Standard forms needed for applications or declarations referred to in this Act are issued by the Finnish Immigration Service.

The Finnish Immigration Service is responsible for the overall administration, communication, information system infrastructure, development and supervision of the citizenship test, and concludes agreements concerning the organisation and preparation of the citizenship test. (552/2026)

Subsection 3 as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 4

Preventing statelessness

The provisions of this Act on the loss of and release from citizenship shall not be applied if, as a consequence of the application of these provisions, a person were to become stateless.

Section 5

Hearing children and custodians

A child who has reached 12 years of age shall be heard in respect of any application or declaration concerning themselves. Any custodian other than the one who has made the application or declaration shall also be heard in respect of the application or declaration, except in cases where the custodian's whereabouts are unknown and cannot be ascertained.

A child who has reached 15 years of age cannot acquire Finnish citizenship on application or by declaration, nor can the child be released from it, if the child has informed that they object to being granted or released from citizenship. Similarly, a child cannot acquire Finnish citizenship on application or by declaration, nor can the child be released from it, if a custodian other than the one who has made the application or declaration has informed that they object to the child being granted or released from citizenship.

The application or declaration may be approved in spite of objections by the child or a custodian other than the one who has made the application or declaration if this is deemed to be in the best interests of the child. In order to establish the best interests of the child, a statement is requested from the body referred to in section 6 of the Social Welfare Act (710/1982), unless this is manifestly unnecessary.

Section 6 (579/2011)

Established identity

Acquiring Finnish citizenship requires that the applicant's identity has been reliably established.

Proof of a person's identity can be provided by means of documents or by providing other information which is considered reliable relating to the person's name, date of birth, family relations, citizenship and other personal data necessary to decide the matter. When establishing a person's identity, any information provided earlier by the person on their own identity and their child's identity to a public authority shall be taken into account.

If an alien has used an identity registered in the Population Information System for at least the past ten years, the identity is deemed to be established in accordance with subsection 1 even where the alien had earlier used more than one identity. However, identity is not considered to have been established solely on the basis of the passage of ten years if, under section 134, subsection 1, paragraph 3 of the Aliens Act (301/2004), the applicant has been issued with an alien's passport for the purpose of obtaining a passport of the applicant's state of citizenship, in which case the applicant shall present that passport or provide evidence that obtaining such a passport has not been possible for reasons beyond the applicant's control. (929/2025)

A change in a person's name, date of birth or citizenship interrupts the ten-year period referred to in subsection 3 if the change cannot be regarded as minor. Other changes relating to identity can also interrupt the specified period if, on the basis of an overall assessment of the person's established identity, the change is considered to constitute a new identity.

Section 6a (929/2025)

Refusal to grant citizenship on grounds of national security

If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that granting citizenship endangers national security, or if granting citizenship is, for some other serious reason, contrary to the interests of society or the State on the basis of an overall assessment of the applicant's situation, a

person shall not be granted citizenship on application or by declaration even if they meet the requirements for acquiring citizenship.

Section 7

Permanent residence and domicile

When assessing an alien's residence in Finland, in this Act, permanent residence and domicile means a person's actual and principal place of residence where the person's residence is of a permanent nature.

Section 8

Being born in Finland

In this Act, being born on a Finnish vessel or aircraft in the territory of a foreign state or in international territory is equivalent to being born in Finland.

Chapter 2

Finnish citizenship by birth

Section 9 (260/2018)

Children

A child acquires Finnish citizenship by birth if:

- 1) the mother is a Finnish citizen;
- 2) the father is a Finnish citizen; and
 - a) married to the child's mother; or
 - b) the child is born in Finland and the man's paternity of the child is established;
- 3) the father is dead but was at the time of his death a Finnish citizen; and

- a) married to the child's mother; or
 - b) the child is born in Finland and the man's paternity of the child is established; or
- 4) the child is born in Finland, does not acquire the citizenship of any foreign state at birth and does not even have a secondary right to acquire the citizenship of any other foreign state by birth.

A child who is born in Finland acquires Finnish citizenship based on the place of birth if the child's parents have refugee status in Finland or if the parents have otherwise been provided protection against the authorities of their state of citizenship. A further requirement is that the child does not acquire either parent's citizenship except through registration of the child's birth with an authority of the parent's state of citizenship or through some other procedure requiring the assistance of an authority of that state. If the protection referred to above has been given to only one of the parents, a further requirement is that the child does not acquire the other parent's citizenship by birth nor has even a secondary right by birth to acquire it.

If the child has two mothers under the Parenthood Act (775/2022):

- 1) the provisions of subsection 1, paragraph 1 on the mother apply to the birth mother; and
- 2) the provisions of subsection 1, paragraph 2, subparagraph b and paragraph 3, subparagraph b on the father and establishment of paternity apply to the mother and establishment of maternity as referred to in section 5, subsection 1 of the Parenthood Act.

(781/2022)

Section 10 (971/2014)

Adopted children

An adopted child under 12 years of age who is an alien and has at least one adoptive parent who is a Finnish citizen acquires Finnish citizenship through adoption as of the date on which the adoption becomes valid in Finland.

Section 11

Parents' marriage

A child who does not acquire Finnish citizenship under section 9 or who has not acquired Finnish citizenship upon declaration acquires Finnish citizenship based on the marriage of the child's parents as of the date on which the marriage was contracted if the man was a Finnish citizen at the time of the child's birth and has been a Finnish citizen ever since and the man's paternity of the child was established before the marriage was contracted.

However, if paternity is established after the contraction of the marriage and the father is still a Finnish citizen, the child acquires Finnish citizenship only as of the date on which paternity is established. If the father has died after the contraction of the marriage, the child acquires Finnish citizenship as of the date on which paternity was established if the father was a Finnish citizen at the time of his death.

Section 12 (260/2018)

Foundlings and children of parents with unknown citizenship

A foundling who is found in Finland is considered a Finnish citizen for as long as the child has not been established to be a citizen of a foreign state. If the child has been established to be a citizen of a foreign state only after the child has reached five years of age, the child nevertheless retains Finnish citizenship.

A child who was born in Finland to parents with unknown citizenship is considered a Finnish citizen for as long as the child has not been established to be a citizen of a foreign state. The same applies to a child born outside marriage in Finland to a birth mother whose citizenship is unknown. If the child has been established to be a citizen of a foreign state only after the child has reached five years of age, the child nevertheless retains Finnish citizenship.

Chapter 3

Finnish citizenship on application

Section 13

General requirements for naturalisation

An alien is granted Finnish citizenship on application if, at the time the application is decided, the alien:

- 1) has reached 18 years of age; (929/2025)
- 2) has and has had a permanent residence and domicile in Finland for the past eight years (*period of residence requirement*); (474/2024)
- 3) has not committed any punishable act other than one for which a fixed fine is imposed, nor has a restraining order been imposed on the alien (*integrity requirement*);
- 4) has not essentially neglected their maintenance liability or pecuniary obligations under public law;
- 5) has sufficient financial resources (*requirement for sufficient financial resources*); (552/2026)

Paragraph 5 as amended by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

- 5) has sufficient financial resources (*requirement for sufficient financial resources*); and (929/2025)
- 6) has satisfactory oral and written skills in the Finnish or Swedish language or, instead of these, equivalent skills in Finnish Sign Language or Finland-Swedish Sign Language (*language skills requirement*). (552/2026)

Paragraph 6 as amended by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

6) has satisfactory oral and written skills in the Finnish or Swedish language or, instead of these, equivalent skills in Finnish Sign Language or Finland-Swedish Sign Language (*language skills requirement*).

7) has sufficient knowledge of Finnish society (*requirement for knowledge of society*) demonstrated in the Finnish or Swedish language referred to in paragraph 6. (552/2026)

Paragraph 7 as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

(579/2011)

The general requirements for naturalisation may only be derogated from as laid down below.

Subsection 3 was repealed by Act 929/2025.

Section 14 (579/2011)

Start of the period of residence

The period of residence starts:

1) on the date on which the applicant moves to or returns to Finland if the applicant holds, or was granted before that date, a permit or right to move to Finland on a permanent basis;

2) on the date on which the first continuous residence permit is granted if the applicant, when entering Finland, does not have a permit which gives the applicant the right to move into the country;

Paragraph 3 was repealed by Act 474/2024.

4) for a Nordic citizen, on the date on which the citizen moves to Finland or registers the notification of change of address, depending on which of these took place later.

Subsection 2 was repealed by Act 929/2025.

Section 15 (474/2024)

Periods of residence included in the period of residence

If the applicant has, prior to the granting of a continuous residence permit, stayed in Finland under a temporary residence permit, half of the period of residence under the temporary residence permit is, notwithstanding the provisions of section 14, subsection 1, paragraph 2, taken into consideration in the determination of the continuous period of residence. This requires that the applicant has resided in Finland under a continuous residence permit for at least one year immediately before the decision on the application.

Section 16 (474/2024)

Days spent abroad included in the period of residence

For the period of residence required for naturalisation, periods of stay outside Finland totalling no more than 365 days are accepted. However, for the year preceding the decision on the application, periods of stay abroad totalling no more than 90 days are accepted. Days spent abroad in excess of these periods are not taken into account when calculating the period of residence.

A continuous stay outside Finland of more than five years interrupts the calculation of the period of residence. In this case, the calculation of the period of residence starts from the beginning in accordance with section 14, subsection 1.

Section 17 (579/2011)

Proof of language skills

Proof of meeting the language skills requirement may be provided through the completion of:

- 1) the National Certificate of Language Proficiency test at proficiency level 3;
- 2) the public administration language examination demonstrating satisfactory oral and written skills;

- 3) the Finnish primary and lower secondary education syllabus with Finnish or Swedish as the native language or second language;
- 4) the Finnish general upper secondary education syllabus with Finnish or Swedish as the native language or second language;
- 5) the Finnish matriculation examination in Finnish or Swedish, including having passed the test in Finnish or Swedish as a native language or second language;
- 6) an initial vocational qualification completed in Finnish or Swedish referred to in the Act on Vocational Education and Training (630/1998);
- 7) a further vocational qualification or specialist vocational qualification completed in Finnish or Swedish referred to in the Act on Vocational Education and Training for Adults (631/1998);
- 8) language studies in Finnish or Swedish under section 6, subsection 1, paragraph 1 of the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004) or section 8, subsection 1, paragraph 1 of the Government Decree on Universities of Applied Sciences (352/2003), or a maturity test in Finnish or Swedish.

Section 17a (929/2025)

Proof of sufficient financial resources and derogation from the requirement for sufficient financial resources

The requirement for sufficient financial resources is met if the applicant provides information that can be regarded as reliable concerning the grounds for their financial resources and has, during the past two years, resorted to unemployment benefit referred to in the Unemployment Security Act (1290/2002) or social assistance referred to in the Social Assistance Act (1412/1997) for no more than three months in total.

The requirement for sufficient financial resources does not apply to persons who are under 18 years of age or have reached 65 years of age.

An applicant may be granted Finnish citizenship even if the requirement for sufficient financial resources is not met if the applicant's state of health or disability prevents compliance with the requirement on a long-term basis, or if, for some other very serious reasons, the applicant is unable to meet the requirement. The best interests of the child shall be taken into account in the consideration.

Section 17b (552/2026)

Proof of knowledge of society and derogation from the requirement for knowledge of society

Proof of meeting the requirement for knowledge of society may be provided by:

- 1) passing the citizenship test;
- 2) completing the matriculation examination in Finnish or Swedish in Finland; or
- 3) completing a university degree in Finnish or Swedish in Finland.

The requirement for knowledge of society does not apply to persons who are under 18 years of age or have reached 65 years of age.

An applicant may be granted Finnish citizenship even if the requirement for knowledge of society is not met if the applicant's state of health or disability prevents compliance with the requirement on a long-term basis, or if there are otherwise very serious reasons for derogating from the requirement.

Section 17b as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 18 (474/2024)

Derogation from the period of residence requirement

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, an alien may be granted Finnish citizenship if:

1) the alien has strong ties to Finland on the basis of their long period of legal residence in Finland or for some other comparable reason; and

2) the alien's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past three years.

A further requirement is that:

1) it is unreasonably difficult for the applicant to carry out their permanent full-time work in Finland without Finnish citizenship;

2) the applicant has, through no fault of their own, been considered a Finnish citizen for at least 10 years due to such a mistake made by a Finnish authority which has resulted in a major consequence related to the rights or obligations of a Finnish citizen; or

3) there are very serious reasons for derogating from the period of residence requirement on grounds other than those referred to in paragraph 1 or 2.

Section 18a (474/2024)

Derogation from the period of residence requirement where the language skills requirement is met

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, an alien may be granted Finnish citizenship if the alien meets the language skills requirement laid down in section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 6 and:

1) the alien has strong ties to Finland in accordance with section 18, subsection 1, paragraph 1; and

2) the alien's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past five years.

Section 18b (579/2011)

Derogation from the language skills requirement

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 6, an alien may be granted Finnish citizenship if:

- 1) it is unreasonably difficult for the applicant to carry out their permanent full-time work in Finland without Finnish citizenship;
- 2) the applicant is 65 years old or older and has refugee status, subsidiary protection status or a residence permit on the basis of humanitarian protection in Finland;
- 3) the applicant cannot meet the language skills requirement because of their state of health or sensory or speech disability;
- 4) there are otherwise very serious reasons for derogating from the language skills requirement.

A derogation from the language skills requirement may be granted to an applicant who is illiterate or aged 65 years or older and has been granted a residence permit on grounds other than those referred to in subsection 1, paragraph 2 if the applicant has elementary comprehension and speaking skills in Finnish or Swedish or has participated regularly in studies in Finnish or Swedish.

Illiteracy and the other requirements referred to in subsection 2 are demonstrated by a certificate issued by the applicant's teacher of Finnish or Swedish.

Section 19 (579/2011)

Derogation from the integrity requirement

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 3, an alien may be granted Finnish citizenship if, on the basis of an overall assessment of the applicant's situation, there are reasonable grounds to derogate from the integrity requirement. In the assessment, particular attention is paid to:

- 1) the time that has passed since the commitment of an offence or offences;
- 2) the nature of the act and the severity of the punishment imposed; and
- 3) whether or not the applicant has repeatedly committed punishable acts.

Even a sentence passed outside Finland may be taken into account in the assessment, provided that the act for which the punishment was imposed would in corresponding circumstances be an offence under Finnish law.

An alien referred to in subsection 1 may not be granted Finnish citizenship before the termination of the probationary period of their conditional imprisonment or a restraining order imposed on them.

Section 19a (579/2011)

Determination of waiting periods

If a citizenship application is rejected under section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 3, a waiting period may be imposed on the applicant during which the applicant is not naturalised without a justified reason. The granting of citizenship during or after the waiting period requires a new application, in which case fulfilment of the requirements for granting citizenship are reassessed.

The waiting period referred to in subsection 1 is:

- 1) with regard to a fine, at least one year and no more than four years from the date on which the offence was committed;
- 2) with regard to an offence for which the court has waived punishment, at least two and no more than four years from the date on which the offence was committed;
- 3) with regard to conditional imprisonment, a monitoring sentence, community service and juvenile punishment, at least three and no more than five years from the date on which the offence was committed;

4) with regard to unconditional imprisonment, at least four and no more than eight years from the date on which the sentence was completed.

(929/2025)

If an applicant has committed more than one punishable offence, the respective waiting periods resulting from the offences are not combined into a single total. Of the alternative waiting periods, the period that ends last is selected. That period is extended by at least two months and no more than one year for each of the other acts giving rise to a waiting period, depending on the nature of the act and the severity of the punishment imposed for it, but in such a way that the waiting period does not exceed the maximum period laid down in subsection 2 for the type of punishment concerned.

The length of the waiting period under subsections 2 and 3 is determined on the basis of an overall assessment of the applicant's situation. In this overall assessment, the factors referred to in section 19 and the applicant's individual circumstances are taken into consideration.

If the applicant has been found guilty and convicted of a very serious offence, a waiting period shall not be imposed and, taking into account the factors referred to in section 19, subsection 1, the applicant shall not be naturalised for the time being. (929/2025)

Section 20 (474/2024)

Derogations pertaining to statelessness

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, a stateless person may be granted Finnish citizenship if the person's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past five years.

Section 20a (474/2024)

Urgent consideration

A citizenship application is considered urgently if the applicant is a beneficiary of international protection or stateless.

A decision on the application shall be made within one year after the authority has received a duly completed application with attachments. If the Finnish Immigration Service has to request or obtain further evidence in the matter, the running of the processing time is suspended until the necessary evidence has been obtained.

A decision may be made after the time limit laid down in subsection 2 if the matter involves particularly complex factual or legal issues, or if a decision cannot be made for reasons beyond the control of the Finnish Immigration Service.

Section 21 (474/2024)

Derogations pertaining to Nordic citizens

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, a citizen of Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark may be granted Finnish citizenship if the citizen's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past two years.

Section 22 (474/2024)

Derogations pertaining to a Finnish citizen's spouse

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, a Finnish citizen's spouse may be granted Finnish citizenship if:

1) the spouses live and have lived together for at least three years, or a deceased Finnish citizen's spouse had lived together with their spouse for at least three years before their spouse's death; and

2) the applicant's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past five years.

Section 22a (474/2024)

Derogation from the period of residence for the spouse of an employee in a Finnish mission

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, Finnish citizenship may be granted if:

1) the applicant's spouse is a Finnish citizen and is employed by the State of Finland in a diplomatic mission, in other comparable mission or in an office of a career consul; and

2) the applicant's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past two years.

Section 23

Derogations pertaining to co-applicants

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraphs 2 and 6, a co-applicant under 15 years of age may be granted Finnish citizenship if, when the decision is made on the application, the co-applicant's permanent residence and domicile is in Finland.

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, a co-applicant who has reached 15 years of age may be granted Finnish citizenship if, when the decision is made on the application, the co-applicant's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past five years. (474/2024)

Section 24

Naturalisation of children

A child may be granted Finnish citizenship on an application made by the child's custodian or guardian if:

1) the person who has made the application is a Finnish citizen and the child lives with this person; or

2) naturalisation is otherwise deemed to be in the best interests of the child for other serious reasons.

(579/2011)

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraphs 2 and 6, a child referred to in subsection 1 may be granted Finnish citizenship if, when the decision is made

on the application, the child is under 15 years of age and has permanent residence and domicile in Finland.

If the child has reached 15 years of age when the decision is made on the application, the child may be granted Finnish citizenship, notwithstanding the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, if the child's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past five years. (474/2024)

However, if a child referred to in subsection 3 is a Nordic citizen, the requirement for the approval of the application is a period of residence of two years. (474/2024)

Section 25 (929/2025)

Effects of gaining full legal capacity on pending applications

If a co-applicant reaches 18 years of age before a decision has been made on the application, the co-applicant shall supplement the application so that it applies to them.

If a child reaches 18 years of age before a decision has been made on an application that the child's custodian has made on the child's behalf, the child shall confirm the application with their own signature. If the application is not confirmed, it shall be rejected.

The Finnish Immigration Service sets a reasonable time limit for the persons referred to in subsections 1 and 2 within which the application shall be supplemented or confirmed. The requirements under section 23, subsection 2 and section 24, subsection 3 apply to applicants who have supplemented or confirmed a citizenship application if the requirements were met before the applicant reached 18 years of age. The requirement for sufficient financial resources and the requirement for knowledge of society do not apply to a person who reaches 18 years of age while the application is pending. (552/2026)

Subsection 3 as amended by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

The Finnish Immigration Service sets a reasonable time limit for the persons referred to in subsections 1 and 2 within which the application shall be supplemented or confirmed. The requirements under section 23, subsection 2 and section 24, subsection 3 apply to

applicants who have supplemented or confirmed a citizenship application if the requirements were met before the applicant reached 18 years of age. With regard to the requirement for sufficient financial resources, the provisions of section 17a, subsection 2 concerning persons under 18 years of age apply to an applicant referred to in subsections 1 and 2.

Chapter 3a (552/2026)

Citizenship test

Section 25a (552/2026)

Content of the citizenship test

The citizenship test assesses basic knowledge of how Finnish society works and of the rights and obligations of individuals. The questions in the multiple-choice test are based on publicly available learning materials for the citizenship test prepared on the basis of the learning materials for civic orientation referred to in section 25 of the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (681/2023). The questions in the test relate to key Finnish legislation, fundamental and human rights, equality, gender equality, Finnish history and culture, and other key topics included in the learning materials for the citizenship test.

The citizenship test shall be taken in the Finnish or Swedish language referred to in section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 6. The test is taken electronically unless there is an impediment to conducting the test electronically. Passing the citizenship test requires that the majority of the answers in the multiple-choice test are correct.

Further provisions on the content of the citizenship test and on passing the test may be laid down by government decree.

Section 25a as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25b (552/2026)

Preparation of the citizenship test

The Finnish Immigration Service concludes an agreement on acquiring the citizenship test questions, answer options and learning materials with a university or other tertiary

education body with sufficient expertise in preparing the citizenship test questions, answer options and learning materials.

Section 25b as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25c (552/2026)

Duties of the body preparing the citizenship test

The body preparing the citizenship test shall:

- 1) prepare, in Finnish and Swedish, the learning materials referred to in section 25a for the citizenship test, based on the learning materials for civic orientation;
- 2) prepare a wide range of citizenship test questions with answer options in Finnish and Swedish;
- 3) be responsible for testing, updating and developing the learning materials, questions and answer options for the test; and
- 4) participate in the activities of the committee of experts referred to in section 25f.

The provisions on criminal liability for acts in office apply to persons employed by the body preparing the citizenship test while performing the duties referred to in subsection 1.

Further provisions on the duties of the body preparing the citizenship test and on the content of agreements concerning those duties may be laid down by government decree.

Section 25c as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25d (552/2026)

Organisation of the citizenship test

The Finnish Immigration Service concludes agreements on the organisation of citizenship test sessions with operators that have sufficient expertise and capacity to organise such

sessions. When concluding agreements, it shall be ensured that a sufficient number of test sessions are available regionally and at sufficiently frequent intervals.

Section 25d as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25e (552/2026)

Duties of the organiser of the citizenship test

The organiser of the citizenship test shall:

- 1) organise the test sessions in accordance with the terms of the agreement;
- 2) ensure the supervision of test sessions;
- 3) implement the special arrangements referred to in section 25g; and
- 4) notify the Finnish Immigration Service without delay of the situations referred to in section 25h for the purpose of deciding on sanctions.

The organiser of the citizenship test has the right to obtain from the Finnish Immigration Service, free of charge and notwithstanding non-disclosure provisions, information essential for the performance of the duties referred to in subsection 1. When performing the duties referred to in subsection 1, the organiser of the test is subject to the non-disclosure obligations laid down in the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999). The provisions on criminal liability for acts in office apply to persons employed by the organiser of the citizenship test while performing the duties referred to in subsection 1.

Further provisions on the duties of citizenship test organisers and on the content of agreements concerning those duties may be laid down by government decree.

Section 25e as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25f (552/2026)

Committee of experts

A committee of experts, appointed by the Finnish Immigration Service for no more than three years at a time, operates under the Finnish Immigration Service. The committee of experts is chaired by a representative of the Finnish Immigration Service. Where possible, a representative with expertise in integration serves as vice-chair. In addition, expert members shall represent expertise at least in education and the bodies preparing and organising the citizenship test.

The committee of experts shall support the Finnish Immigration Service in the general development and administration of the citizenship test. At the request of the Finnish Immigration Service, the committee issues a statement on a request for an administrative review concerning the citizenship test.

Further provisions on the composition and duties of the committee of experts and on the consideration of matters by the committee may be laid down by government decree.

Section 25f as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25g (552/2026)

Special arrangements for taking the test

A person who, due to an illness, a disability, a special difficulty in reading and writing, or other comparable reason, is unable to take the citizenship test in the same manner as other test takers, is entitled to special arrangements for taking the test.

A person under 65 years of age referred to in section 18b, subsections 2 and 3 of the Act may take the test orally.

The Finnish Immigration Service decides on the use of special arrangements. A separate request for special arrangements shall be submitted to the Finnish Immigration Service.

Section 25g as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25h (552/2026)

Sanctions for disorderly conduct and test misconduct

A person taking the citizenship test is deemed to have failed the test if they engage in disorderly conduct during the test session and fail to cease the conduct despite being instructed to do so by the supervisor of the test session.

If the test taker engages in test misconduct during a test session, assists in such conduct or attempts to engage in such conduct during a test session, the test taker is deemed to have failed the test and they lose their right to participate in a test session for six months following the test session. If the conduct is repeated or otherwise particularly serious and harmful, the test taker is deemed to have failed the test and they lose their right to participate in a test session for 12 months following the test session. If the test taker has already registered for a new test session, the Finnish Immigration Service may cancel the participation.

The decision in a matter referred to in subsections 1 and 2 is made by the Finnish Immigration Service. The decision is enforced regardless of an appeal, unless the appellate authority prohibits enforcement.

Section 25h as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 25i (552/2026)

Test fee

The Finnish Immigration Service charges a test fee from a person registered for the test. Provisions on the level of the test fee are laid down by Decree of the Ministry of the Interior on Fees for Services of the Finnish Immigration Service in compliance with the provisions of the Act on Criteria for Charges Payable to the State (150/1992) concerning fees charged for services rendered under public law.

The test fee is refunded to a person registered for the test if the person is prevented from participating in the test due to their own illness. The fee is not refunded if the Finnish Immigration Service has not been notified of the impediment before the test session. A

request for a refund of the fee shall be submitted to the Finnish Immigration Service within 14 days of the test date.

Section 25i as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Chapter 3a as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Chapter 4

Finnish citizenship by declaration

Section 26 (781/2022)

Aliens whose father or mother is a Finnish citizen

An alien who does not acquire Finnish citizenship under section 9 acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if the father, or the mother referred to in section 5, subsection 1 of the Parenthood Act, was a Finnish citizen when the alien was born and the alien was born:

1) in Finland and paternity or maternity was established after the alien had reached 18 years of age; or (929/2025)

2) outside Finland and paternity or maternity has been established.

Section 27 (971/2014)

Adopted children who have reached 12 years of age

If a child who is an alien has reached 12 years of age before adoption, the child acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if at least one of the adoptive parents is a Finnish citizen and the adoption is valid in Finland.

Section 28

Young persons

A person who has reached 18 but not 23 years of age acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if the person's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for

at least 10 years in total, of which at least two years without interruption before making the declaration, and if the person has not been sentenced to imprisonment.

However, if an applicant referred to in subsection 1 was born in Finland, the requirement for the approval of the declaration is a six-year period of residence. If, before making the declaration, an applicant referred to in subsection 1 has had permanent residence and domicile in Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark, such residence is comparable to residence in Finland, but only for the five years preceding the declaration and only up to 16 years of age.

Finnish citizenship may not be acquired under subsection 1 by a person who has lost Finnish citizenship on the grounds of providing false information, nor by a citizen or former citizen of an enemy state after a state of defence has been declared.

Section 29 (564/2019)

Former Finnish citizens

A former Finnish citizen acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration.

A person who has lost Finnish citizenship under section 32, 33 or 33a or who has been sentenced by final judgment for an offence referred to in the latter section to a punishment referred to therein cannot acquire Finnish citizenship under subsection 1.

Section 30 (579/2011)

Nordic citizens

A citizen of Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark who has reached 18 years of age acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if the citizen has acquired the citizenship of Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark through a procedure other than naturalisation, if the citizen's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for the past five years, and if the citizen has not been sentenced to a custodial sentence during that period.

Section 31

Date of acquisition of citizenship

Citizenship on the basis of a declaration is deemed to have been acquired on the date the declaration became pending at the competent authority if the requirements for acquiring citizenship were met on the date on which the declaration became pending. In other cases, citizenship is deemed to have been acquired on the date on which the requirements laid down for the acquisition of citizenship were met.

Chapter 5

Loss and retention of Finnish citizenship

Section 32 (781/2022)

Effects of annulment of paternity or maternity

If the husband's paternity has been annulled or if an action which has resulted in his paternity being annulled has been instituted before the child has reached five years of age, or if an established paternity has been annulled, or if maternity has been annulled in the situation referred to in section 5, subsection 1 of the Parenthood Act, or if an action which has resulted in the annulment of paternity or maternity has been instituted within five years of establishing paternity or maternity, a decision may be made to the effect that the child loses their Finnish citizenship acquired on the basis of their father's or mother's citizenship. Such a decision is based on an overall assessment of the child's situation. In the assessment, particular account shall be taken of the child's age and ties to Finland.

Section 33

Loss of citizenship on the grounds of providing false information

If a person has provided false or misleading information about themselves, or other false or misleading information the knowledge of which would have resulted in the refusal of Finnish citizenship, or has concealed a relevant circumstance that would have had the same effect, it may be decided that the person loses Finnish citizenship acquired on application or by declaration. A decision on the loss of Finnish citizenship granted to a person may also be made on the grounds that the person has otherwise acted fraudulently in acquiring citizenship. (929/2025)

If a child has acquired Finnish citizenship together with a person referred to in subsection 1 or if the citizenship of a person referred to in subsection 1 has been a requirement for the child to acquire Finnish citizenship, a decision on the loss of Finnish citizenship can also be made with regard to the child. A child cannot, however, lose Finnish citizenship if the child's parent is a Finnish citizen.

A decision referred to in subsections 1 and 2 is based on an overall assessment of the person's situation. In addition to the reprehensibility of the act, the assessment also takes into account the circumstances in which it was committed and of the ties to Finland of the person who has made the application or declaration. With regard to a child, account shall also be taken of the child's age and ties to Finland.

A decision on the loss of citizenship shall not be made in cases under subsections 1 and 2 if more than ten years have passed since a decision was made on the citizenship application or declaration. (929/2025)

Section 33a (564/2019)

Loss of citizenship on the grounds of committing treason, high treason or terrorist offences (420/2026)

If a person who, in addition to Finnish citizenship, holds the citizenship of another state has been sentenced in Finland by final judgment for an offence against the vital interests of Finland as set forth in chapter 12, sections 1–6 or 9; chapter 13, section 1 or 2; chapter 34, section 12; chapter 34a, section 2, subsection 1, paragraphs 3–9 or subsections 2–4, sections 3–7 or 9–11 of the Criminal Code (39/1889) to unconditional imprisonment or a combination sentence of at least two years, it may be decided that the person loses Finnish citizenship. A person who has been sentenced to a punishment referred to above for an attempt to commit an offence referred to above or for complicity in such an offence, or in an attempt to commit such an offence, may also lose citizenship. (420/2026)

If a joint punishment has been imposed for two or more offences, the loss of citizenship also requires that at least one of the offences is an offence referred to in subsection 1 and that, according to the judgment, the punishment imposed for the offence would have been a punishment referred to in subsection 1 if imposed separately.

A person cannot lose their citizenship if they were under 18 years of age when committing the offence or if more than five years have elapsed since the judgment referred to in subsection 1 became final.

Section 33b (564/2019)

Assessment when deciding on the loss of citizenship based on an offence

A decision on the loss of citizenship referred to in section 33a is made on the basis of an overall assessment of the person's situation. The assessment takes into account the person's ties to Finland and any other state of citizenship they may hold. When assessing these ties, at least the person's history of residence and stay, family ties and language skills as well as their schooling, studies, employment and other economic activities in their states of citizenship shall be taken into account. The assessment shall also take into account the possible consequences for the family members of the person.

Section 34

Retention of citizenship upon reaching 22 years of age

A Finnish citizen who also holds the citizenship of a foreign state retains Finnish citizenship upon reaching 22 years of age only if they have a sufficient connection with Finland.

A sufficient connection is deemed to exist if:

- 1) the person was born in Finland and their municipality of residence as referred to in the Municipality of Residence Act (201/1994) is in Finland when they reach 22 years of age;
- 2) the person's municipality of residence has been in Finland, or the person's permanent residence and domicile has been in Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark, for at least seven years in total before reaching 22 years of age;
- 3) the person has, after reaching 18 years of age but before reaching 22 years of age,:

a) notified a Finnish mission, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency or the State Department of Åland in writing of their wish to retain Finnish citizenship; (1161/2019)

b) applied for a Finnish passport or identity card or received a Finnish passport or identity card; (668/2016)

c) completed or is currently completing conscript or non-military service or service referred to in the Act on Voluntary Military Service for Women (194/1995); or

d) acquired Finnish citizenship on application or by declaration.

(579/2011)

Section 35

Release from Finnish citizenship

A Finnish citizen who also holds the citizenship of a foreign state or who wishes to become a citizen of a foreign state may be released from Finnish citizenship on application. The application shall state the reason why the applicant wishes to be released from Finnish citizenship. The application is not approved if the applicant's municipality of residence is in Finland and if the purpose of the release is to avoid an obligation associated with Finnish citizenship.

If the applicant is not yet a citizen of a foreign state when the decision is made on the application, the applicant may be released from Finnish citizenship only by a decision that enters into force if the applicant produces evidence of having acquired citizenship of a foreign state within the time limit specified in the decision. After the Finnish Immigration Service has received evidence of the acquisition of citizenship of a foreign state, a certificate confirming that the condition has been met is issued. (579/2011)

Chapter 6

Determination of citizenship status and notifications by public authorities

Section 36

Determination of citizenship status

The Finnish Immigration Service determines citizenship status at the request of a public authority or the party concerned if the matter is of importance with regard to the existence of Finnish citizenship or some right or obligation related to it, the correctness of any entry in public authorities' filing systems, an alien's residence in Finland or some other reason comparable to these. (974/2007)

If a person's citizenship is unknown and they have a municipality of residence in Finland, efforts shall be made to determine the person's citizenship status. Citizenship status is, however, not determined if the person's identity has not been established in other respects.

Section 37

Provision of information on how to retain citizenship

Information is extracted from the Population Information System every year on people registered as Finnish citizens who will reach 18 years of age that year and whose address at which they can be reached is found in the Population Information System. Information is, however, not extracted on people who has had a municipality of residence in Finland for at least seven years in total.

People on whom information is extracted from the Population Information System are given instructions on how to proceed in order to retain Finnish citizenship upon reaching 22 years of age. The Finnish Immigration Service is responsible for giving these instructions. The instructions are given in the year the person reaches 18 years of age. (974/2007)

Section 38 (1161/2019)

Duties of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and the State Department of Åland related to determination of citizenship

Where a person retains Finnish citizenship upon reaching 22 years of age based on a sufficient connection, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency or the State Department of Åland makes an entry to that effect in the Population Information System and notifies the party concerned of the entry.

Information is regularly extracted from the Population Information System on people who have reached 22 years of age and are entered in the Population Information System as citizens of Finland and a foreign state. If a person has lost Finnish citizenship upon reaching 22 years of age because the person has not had a sufficient connection with Finland, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency or the State Department of Åland makes an entry to that effect in the Population Information System and notifies the party concerned of this if the person's address is available.

Section 39 (1161/2019)

Obligation of parties concerned to provide information

For the determination of citizenship status, the party concerned shall provide the Finnish Immigration Service and, in cases referred to in section 38, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency or the State Department of Åland with any information known to them that relates to the acquisition or loss of citizenship, and shall assist in obtaining the necessary information and documents to the extent that such assistance can reasonably be required of them.

Section 40

Public authorities' obligation to notify each other

The Finnish Immigration Service submits its decisions on Finnish citizenship for entry in the Population Information System. (974/2007)

The Digital and Population Data Services Agency and the State Department of Åland notify the Finnish Immigration Service of any child born in Finland whose parents have been

entered in the Population Information System as stateless persons or whose parents' citizenship is unknown. (1161/2019)

After a Finnish mission has received notification of a person's wish to retain Finnish citizenship or after the police or a Finnish mission has issued a Finnish passport to a person who has reached 18 but not 22 years of age, the police or the mission submits the matter for entry in the Population Information System. An equivalent notification is also given by the Defence Command Finland or the Centre for Non-Military Service when a Finnish citizen who is under 22 years of age has completed their conscript or non-military service in Finland. An entry of the retention of Finnish citizenship under section 34 shall be made in the System before the person reaches 22 years of age. (971/2014)

Notification referred to in subsection 3 is not, however, necessary if the person has had a municipality of residence in Finland for at least seven years in total.

Chapter 7

Request for review

Section 41 (929/2025)

Request for review

Provisions on requesting a judicial review by an administrative court are laid down in the Administrative Judicial Procedure Act (808/2019).

An administrative review of a decision to reject a person's citizenship test may be requested from the Finnish Immigration Service. (552/2026)

Subsection 2 as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

The Finnish Immigration Service may request a statement on a request for an administrative review referred to in subsection 2 from the committee of experts referred to in section 25f. In other respects, the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003) apply to the procedure for requesting an administrative review. A decision referred to in subsection 2 that is made on a request for an administrative review is not eligible for review by appeal. (552/2026)

Subsection 3 as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Section 42 (552/2026)

Fee for the consideration of a request for an administrative review

The consideration of a request for an administrative review referred to in section 41, subsection 2 concerning a citizenship test is subject to a fee. Provisions on the level of the fee are laid down by Decree of the Ministry of the Interior on Fees for Services of the Finnish Immigration Service in compliance with the provisions of the Act on Criteria for Charges Payable to the State concerning fees charged for services rendered under public law.

The further consideration of the request for an administrative review after it has become pending requires that the fee charged for the consideration of the request has been paid within 30 days after the request became pending. The request for an administrative review may be ruled inadmissible if the fee charged for the consideration of the request has not been paid within the said time limit.

The fee charged for the consideration of the request for an administrative review is refunded to the party if the Finnish Immigration Service amends the decision subject to review in favour of the party requesting the review so that the applicant is deemed to have passed the citizenship test.

Section 42 as added by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

Section 42 (929/2025)

Section 42 was repealed by Act 929/2025.

Chapter 8

Miscellaneous provisions

Section 43

Co-applicants in applications and declarations

A co-applicant may be granted Finnish citizenship on application or by declaration only together with the applicant. The requirements concerning the applicants under chapter 4 do not apply to co-applicants in declarations.

Subsection 2 was repealed by Act 971/2014. (971/2014)

Section 44

Filing applications and declarations

An application and declaration referred to in this Act shall be submitted in person to the Finnish Immigration Service. An application for release from Finnish citizenship, a declaration for a child referred to in section 26, a declaration for an adopted child referred to in section 27 and a declaration referred to in section 29, subsection 1 may also be submitted to a Finnish mission or honorary consulate. An application or declaration on behalf of a child applicant shall be made and submitted by the child's custodian or guardian. Any co-applicant or child applicant shall be present when the application or declaration is submitted. (502/2016)

The Finnish Immigration Service checks the identity of the applicant or of the custodian who submits an application or declaration on behalf of a child. If the co-applicant or the child applicant has a travel document or an identity card of their own, the Finnish Immigration Service also checks the child's identity. If the declaration is filed outside Finland, the identity is checked by the mission. (502/2016)

The further consideration of the application or declaration following the check under subsection 2 is conditional on the payment of the processing fee of the Finnish Immigration Service. The fee is determined in accordance with the Act on Criteria for Charges Payable to the State. Further provisions on the fee are issued by decree of the Ministry of the Interior. (552/2026)

Subsection 3 as amended by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

The further consideration of the application or declaration following the check under subsection 2 is conditional on the payment of the processing fee of the Finnish Immigration Service. The fee is determined in accordance with the Act on Criteria for Charges Payable to the State (150/1992). Further provisions on the fee are issued by decree of the Ministry of the Interior. (974/2007)

The Administrative Procedure Act applies to the processing of matters under this Act at honorary consulates. (552/2026)

Subsection 4 as amended by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

The Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003) applies to the processing of matters under this Act at honorary consulates. (974/2007)

The Act on Electronic Services and Communication in the Public Sector (13/2003) applies to electronic services. If an application or declaration has been submitted electronically, the identity check referred to in subsection 2 shall take place prior to the final decision on the matter and the processing fee referred to in subsection 3 shall be paid prior to the commencement of the processing of the application. (620/2007)

Section 45

Attachments to the applicant's application

The applicant shall include in their citizenship application proof, as referred to in section 17, of their skills in the Finnish or Swedish language, proof, as referred to in section 17b, of knowledge of society, and proof, as referred to in section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 5, of the source of their financial resources in Finland. Proof of language skills is, however, not required if the applicant is a child under 15 years of age. If a co-applicant who has reached 15 years of age is included in the application, the applicant shall also include in the application proof of the co-applicant's skills in the Finnish or Swedish language. If the child

reaches 15 years of age after the application is filed but before a decision has been made on the application, proof of the child's language skills shall be included in the application. (552/2026)

Subsection 1 as amended by Act 552/2026 enters into force on 1 January 2027.

Previous wording:

The applicant shall include in their citizenship application proof, as referred to in section 17, of their skills in the Finnish or Swedish language and proof, as referred to in section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 5, of the source of their financial resources in Finland. Proof of language skills is, however, not required if the applicant is a child under 15 years of age. If a co-applicant who has reached 15 years of age is included in the application, the applicant shall also include in the application proof of the co-applicant's skills in the Finnish or Swedish language. If the child reaches 15 years of age after the application is filed but before a decision has been made on the application, proof of the child's language skills shall be included in the application. (579/2011)

If the applicant wishes to invoke a provision on a derogation laid down in this Act in support of their application, they shall include in the application proof on which their claim is based.

Section 46

Obtaining additional evidence

The applicant may be obliged to include in their citizenship application a document issued by a foreign authority that is equivalent to an extract from the criminal records of the states in which the applicant, or a co-applicant who has reached 15 years of age, has resided for at least two years if such a document can reasonably be obtained. Alternatively, the applicant may give their consent to obtaining such a document.

The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Defence Command of Finland and the relevant social welfare authorities may be requested to issue a statement on an application or declaration. (929/2025)

The Finnish Immigration Service, the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service and the National Bureau of Investigation may invite the applicant to provide information needed for

the consideration of the application or declaration. Where possible, these authorities shall also interview the applicant. If the application or declaration is filed abroad, the Finnish mission may, at the request of the Finnish Immigration Service, invite the applicant to provide information needed for the consideration of the matter. (971/2014)

The applicant may also be obliged to provide other additional evidence if this is necessary to establish whether the requirements for approving an application or declaration are met.

Section 47 (974/2007)

Documents to be submitted to the Finnish Immigration Service

Any document submitted to an authority in connection with an application, declaration or determination of citizenship status referred to in this Act shall be an original document. The Finnish Immigration Service may also accept a certified copy of a document if the copy can be considered reliable.

A document issued by a foreign authority shall be legalised or accompanied by a certificate issued by a competent authority of the state concerned, unless it is manifestly unnecessary to legalise the document or attach such a certificate to it. The applicant or other party concerned shall, in a matter filed on their own initiative, arrange for a document to be translated into Finnish or Swedish. The Finnish Immigration Service may also accept documents that have not been legalised, documents that are not accompanied by the above-mentioned certificate, and documents that have not been translated, if this is justified in view of the nature of the document and the matter.

The Finnish Immigration Service may accept electronic documents submitted in a manner laid down in the Act on Electronic Services and Communication in the Public Sector if the documents can be considered reliable.

Section 48 (619/2020)

Section 48 was repealed by Act 619/2020.

Section 49

Providing contact details

Persons filing a matter referred to in this Act on their own initiative are obliged to provide the authorities considering the matter with their contact details and any changes to them.

Section 50

Decisions and service of decisions

Reasons for a decision made under this Act that is favourable to the applicant need not be given. If a decision is only partially favourable or if a favourable decision on a child was made against one custodian's or the child's will, the reasons for the decision are stated.

A decision favourable to the applicant and a decision on the determination of citizenship status may be served by sending the decision by post to the address given by the applicant. The addressee is considered to have been informed of the decision in Finland at the latest on the seventh day and abroad no later than 30 days after the letter was sent, unless otherwise shown. (579/2011)

Decisions other than those favourable to the applicant are served by post against an acknowledgment of receipt. A decision can also be handed over to an addressee or their representative on the basis of an authorisation provided by the applicant, their custodian or a party to another citizenship matter or their custodian. In this case, a written certificate of service shall be drawn up, indicating the person effecting the service and the addressee and date of the service. If an intended service abroad cannot be effected, the document shall be served by publication in Finland as laid down in the Act on Service in Administrative Matters (232/1966).

Decisions on matters filed by an applicant in accordance with section 44, subsection 5 may be served in a manner laid down in the Act on Electronic Services and Communication in the Public Sector. (620/2007)

Section 51

Further provisions

Further provisions on the duties of the authorities in the filing and consideration of applications, declarations and matters pertaining to the determination of citizenship status, on the payment of the processing fee where a matter is filed at an honorary consulate, and on the arrangement of cooperation between authorities for the appropriate coordination of measures and the provision of information in matters concerning Finnish citizenship are laid down by government decree.

Provisions on which of the Finnish missions manage the duties laid down for missions in this Act are laid down in section 9 of the Consular Services Act (498/1999) and in the decree issued under it. (971/2014)

Chapter 9

Transitional provisions and entry into force

Section 52

Entry into force

This Act enters into force on 1 June 2003.

This Act repeals the Nationality Act of 28 June 1968 (401/1968), as amended (*previous Act*).

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Act may be undertaken before its entry into force.

Section 53

General transitional provisions

This Act applies to matters filed after the entry into force of the Act, subject to the derogations provided below.

Instead of the period of residence under section 13, subsection 1, paragraph 2, the period of residence under the previous Act applies to an applicant and co-applicant of a citizenship

application where the application is filed after the entry into force of this Act if, at the time of filing the citizenship application, the applicant meets the requirement set for the period of residence in the previous Act and if the application is filed within one year after the entry into force of this Act.

The provisions of this Act on the accumulated period of residence apply, however, to a citizenship application referred to in subsection 2 if they result in an outcome that is more favourable to the applicant.

Section 54

Matters pending at the time of the entry into force of this Act

With regard to the requirements set for the acquisition and retention of citizenship, the previous Act applies to a citizenship declaration and to an application for the retention of citizenship pending at the time of the entry into force of this Act, and the provisions of the previous Act concerning the loss or retention of citizenship apply to a matter under section 8b, subsections 1 and 3 of the previous Act.

The requirement established for the period of residence under the previous Act applies to a citizenship application pending at the time of the entry into force of this Act if, at the time of the entry into force of this Act, the applicant's permanent residence and domicile is and has been in Finland for at least the minimum period of time required for residence under the previous Act and the requirement for sufficient financial resources established under the previous Act is met. The provisions of this Act on the accumulated period of residence apply, however, to the application if they result in an outcome that is more favourable to the applicant.

The requirement for respectable life under the previous Act or the provisions of section 13, subsection 1, paragraphs 3–5 and section 19 of this Act apply to a citizenship application pending at the time of the entry into force of this Act, whichever of the two results in an outcome that is more favourable to the applicant.

With regard to proof of skills in the Finnish or Swedish language, section 1, subsection 2 and section 5, subsection 2 of the Nationality Decree (699/1985) apply to a citizenship

application and an application for the retention of citizenship pending at the time of the entry into force of this Act.

Section 55

Conditional naturalisation decisions

Section 11, subsection 1 of the previous Act may be applied, within the period of time specified in the decision, to a decision issued under section 4, subsection 3 of the previous Act.

The Finnish Immigration Service may, at the written request of the applicant referred to in a decision under subsection 1, decide to remove the condition if the request has been made within the period specified in the decision. If the condition also applies to a co-applicant, the removal of the condition for their part requires, in addition to the applicant's written request, the consent of the co-applicant's custodians and of a co-applicant who has reached 12 years of age. In deciding the matter, the provisions of this Act concerning the hearing of a child and a custodian shall also be observed, where appropriate. If the co-applicant has reached 18 years of age or has married after the decision was given, the co-applicant shall request that the condition be removed with regard to them. (974/2007)

An alien becomes a Finnish citizen under subsection 1 on the date when the Finnish Immigration Service, by its decision, states that the condition is met. If the Finnish Immigration Service decides under subsection 2 that the condition be removed from the decision, Finnish citizenship is deemed to have been acquired on the date on which the decision to remove the condition was made. (974/2007)

Section 56

Application of the loss of citizenship provisions under citizenship legislation previously in force

The provisions on the loss of citizenship contained in Finnish citizenship legislation previously in force shall not be applied if, as a consequence of the application of these provisions, a person were to become stateless.

Section 57

Retention of citizenship under the previous Act

Section 34 of this Act does not apply to a person who reaches 22 years of age after the entry into force of this Act and who has been found to retain Finnish citizenship under section 8b, subsection 1 or 3 of the previous Act. Furthermore, section 34 of this Act does not apply to a person who reaches 22 years of age after the entry into force of this Act if a decision has been given on their application referred to in section 8b, subsection 2 of the previous Act to the effect that they retain citizenship.

Section 58

Declarations based on the father's Finnish citizenship

An alien born outside marriage before the entry into force of this Act acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if the father was a Finnish citizen at the time of the child's birth and paternity has been established. A declaration may also be made if the father was dead at the time of the child's birth but was a Finnish citizen at the time of his death and paternity has been established. The declaration shall be made within five years of the entry into force of this Act.

Section 59

Citizenship declarations made by adopted children under 12 years of age

An adopted child who is under 12 years of age acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if the decision on adoption was made before the entry into force of this Act. A further requirement is that at least one of the adoptive parents is a Finnish citizen and that the adoption is valid in Finland. The declaration shall be made within five years of the entry into force of this Act.

The number of the section has been corrected.

Section 60

Citizenship declarations to be made within a time limit

A former Finnish citizen acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if they have lost Finnish citizenship before the entry into force of this Act under:

- 1) section 1, subsection 1 of the Act on the Loss of Finnish Citizenship (181/1927);
- 2) section 10 of the Act on Acquiring and Loss of Finnish Citizenship (325/1941);
- 3) section 8 of the Nationality Act (401/1968); or
- 4) section 8 of the Act amending the Nationality Act (584/1984).

An alien who has reached 18 years of age acquires Finnish citizenship by declaration if the alien's:

- 1) parent has acquired Finnish citizenship through a procedure other than naturalisation;
and
- 2) parent was a Finnish citizen at time of the entry into force of this Act or if the parent has died before the entry into force of this Act but was a Finnish citizen at the time of their death;
- 3) parent would be entitled to acquire Finnish citizenship under subsection 1 or, in the case of a deceased parent, the conditions laid down in subsection 1 for regaining Finnish citizenship would be met;

However, a person referred to in subsection 2 does not acquire Finnish citizenship if the person is a former Finnish citizen who has, upon their own application, been released from Finnish citizenship.

The declaration referred to in subsections 1 and 2 shall be made within five years of the entry into force of this Act.

Section 61

Filing citizenship declarations

In addition to the provisions laid down in section 44, a declaration made under sections 58–60 may also be submitted to the relevant Finnish diplomatic mission, consulate or honorary consulate.

A declaration may also be sent to a mission by post. In such cases the declaration will not become pending until the processing fee referred to in section 44, subsection 3 has been paid. The mission shall check the applicant's identity on the basis of the declaration sent to it by post and, if necessary, by obtaining additional evidence. If the identity cannot be checked in any other way, the relevant Finnish diplomatic mission or a consulate headed by a career official may make the further consideration of the declaration conditional upon the applicant appearing in person at the mission. With regard to declarations sent to it, an honorary consulate shall, if necessary, request another mission to make such a decision.

Section 62

Retention of citizenship upon reaching 22 years of age

Where Finnish citizenship is granted under sections 58 and 60, the applicant is deemed to have a sufficient connection with Finland under section 34, subsection 2 on the basis of the citizenship declaration made by the applicant if they have reached 18 but not 22 years of age when the decision is made.