WHAT IS Spanish citizenship by choice?

Choice of nationality is a benefit which Spanish legislation offers foreign citizens under certain conditions in order to acquire Spanish citizenship. The right to acquire Spanish citizenship by this method applies to:

- People who are or have been subject to the parental authority of a Spanish citizen.
- People whose father or mother was Spanish and born in Spain.
- People whose establishment of kinship (understood to be the establishment of who a person’s parents are) or birth in Spain happened after they were 18 years old. In this case the time limit for opting for nationality is two years from the determination of kinship or birth.
- Persons who were adopted by Spanish subjects after the age of 18. In this case the right of choice exists until the interested party is 20.

Guide to access to the services of the Central Civil Register
C/ Bolsa, 1

APPLICATION FOR SPANISH CITIZENSHIP BY CHOICE

For more information:
www.mjusticia.es

Citizen Support Centre:
902 007 214
(Telephone service is only available in Spanish)
WHAT IS the Central Civil Register?

The Register records the events and acts of marital status which are not the responsibility of other registries, or when exceptional circumstances mean that the corresponding registry is unable to record them; it also records events and acts of civil society affecting Spaniards abroad. Additionally, when a Consular Register is responsible for recording an event because it occurred abroad and the person affected is resident in Spain, this must first be registered in the Central Civil Register, and later transferred to the corresponding Consular Register.

The Central Register will also receive books consisting of duplicates of:
1. consular registrations.
2. Registrations of births registered in the Municipal Registries of the home country in the case of international adoption, and of foreign citizens who have acquired Spanish citizenship.
3. Registrations of Municipal Registries relating to judicial rulings affecting legal capacity, parental authority and custody of a minor, the care or administration of persons presumed incapable or minors not subject to legal custody, and the constitution and administration of protected assets.

HOW can I apply?

An application for Spanish citizenship by choice can be made by various agents:
- By the legal representative of applicants under the age of 14 or with disabilities. In this case, the option requires the authorisation of the Civil Register Officer of the applicant’s domicile, after the ruling of the Department of Public Prosecution. Such authorisation will be granted in the interests of the minor or disabled person.
- By the interested party, assisted by his legal representative, if older than 14 or, if with disabilities, if the degree of disability permits.
- By the interested party alone, if emancipated or aged over 18.
- By the interested party alone, within the two years following recovery of full capability.

Time limit

The right to apply for Spanish citizenship by choice expires two years after the majority of the interested party, even if disabled, and in all cases this party must be subject at some time to the parental authority of a Spanish citizen.

However, according to article 20.3 of the Civil Code, people whose father or mother was originally Spanish and born in Spain are exempt from this expiry.

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