

Common Template of EMN Study 2019

Pathways to citizenship for third-country nationals in EU Member States

National Contribution from *the Netherlands*

Disclaimer: The following information has been provided primarily for the purpose of contributing to a synthesis report for this EMN study. The EMN NCP has provided information that is, to the best of its knowledge, up-to-date, objective and reliable within the context and confines of this study. The information may thus not provide a complete description and may not represent the entirety of the official policy of the EMN NCPs' Member State.

Top-line factsheet [max. 1 page]

*The top-line factsheet will serve as an overview of the **national contribution** introducing the study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policy-makers. Please add any innovative or visual presentations that can carry through into the synthesis report as possible infographics and visual elements.*

Please provide a concise summary of the main findings of Sections 1-7:

Acquisition of citizenship in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands the acquisition of citizenship is based on mixed *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*. This is stated in the Netherlands Nationality Act (chapter two, article three), which is the legal instrument covering the acquisition of citizenship for third-country nationals in The Netherlands. Next to **ordinary naturalisation**, third-country nationals can also acquire the Dutch citizenship through the **option** procedure which is a different procedure than the naturalisation procedure. The option procedure is a fast and easy way to acquire Dutch citizenship. However, as specific conditions apply, not every third-country national can apply for the option statement.

Conditions and requirements for the acquisition of citizenship through ordinary naturalisation in the Netherlands

In order to qualify for Dutch citizenship through **ordinary naturalisation** you need to be 18 years or older or have been married/ registered partnership before attaining that age. You need to have your residence in the Netherlands and have lived uninterruptedly in the Kingdom of the Netherlands for at least 5 years with a valid residence permit. Several exceptions apply to the 5 year requirement. In the Netherlands, the period of residence is based on legal residence. You need to be registered at the town hall in the municipality where you live in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) on your home address.

A condition for naturalisation is that the third-country national has passed (or has been exempted from) the civic **integration exam or naturalisation test** and has obtained the civic integration diploma.

With regard to **public order and security**, there can be no ongoing criminal proceedings against the third-country national in the Netherlands or abroad when applying for naturalisation. The third-country national cannot pose a threat to public order and security in the Netherlands or pose a threat to the safety of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The applicant's economic/financial situation, standard of living or the housing situation are not taken into account when applying for ordinary naturalisation.

Naturalisation procedure

The third-country national has to apply for naturalisation in the municipality in which (s)he lives. The municipality advises the Immigration- and Naturalisation Service (IND) on whether there are any objections. The IND takes this into account when making a decision. When the decision is positive, the third-country national is obliged to attend a **naturalisation ceremony**. During this ceremony the third-country national makes the **declaration of solidarity** -by which the third-country national agrees that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands apply to him/her- and the naturalisation decision is presented. The legally prescribed maximum time period for the entire naturalisation procedure is 12 months. Only rarely are cases prioritised and only in highly exceptional cases (such as for reasons of state interest) is it possible to grant naturalisation when certain requirements for the normal procedure have not been fulfilled.

Verification of identity can be challenging in case of lack of documentary evidence

Regarding the verification of the identity of naturalisation applicants it can be challenging for the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) when third-country nationals appeal for **lack of documentary evidence**. This is mostly because the IND has to have information about documentary procedures of all countries in the world. Moreover, it is harder for the IND to check the identity of an applicant when there are no available documents, although in most cases the IND has collected relevant information during the immigration procedure.

Dual citizenship

In principle the third-country national has to renounce his/her nationality in order to acquire Dutch citizenship. There are exceptions to this **rule of renunciation**, for example in case the third-country national is married to or in a registered partnership with a Dutch citizen or is holder of an asylum residence permit. In those cases where third-country nationals do not have to renounce their former nationality, and thus have dual nationality, there are no particular restrictions. However, the rule of renunciation can be seen as a deterrent for those who consider applying for naturalisation. From research it appears that migrants naturalise later and less often when they have to renounce their nationality.

Citizenship and integration

The acquisition of citizenship as such is not specifically addressed in the **integration policy** of the Netherlands. Furthermore, no evaluation or research has been done indicating that the acquisition of citizenship facilitates integration on the labour market.

With regard to the **election process**, only national and provincial elections are limited to Dutch citizens. Elections with a more regional nature such as the municipality and water board elections are open to those who are lawfully residing in the corresponding communities, regardless of their nationality.

In the field of **social security**, the Dutch government does not distinguish between citizens and those individuals holding a permanent residence permit. When it comes to restricting certain types of **employment** to Dutch citizens, the Dutch government follows the guidelines provided in EU law and solely restricts employment to types of employment that requires a certain degree of loyalty to the Netherlands (e.g. judges, police officers, soldiers and policy officers on a federal level). Employment in the public service that does not require this sense of loyalty, is not restricted to Dutch citizens (such as teachers, nurses and policy officers on a regional level). In general, once citizenship has been granted to the applicant, the Dutch government does not make a distinction between the 'new' citizens and the natural citizens. Therefore, no specific support is given once citizenship has been granted. However, there are possibilities to follow language courses to increase Dutch language skills and there are certain initiatives to promote the integration of Dutch nationals with a migration background to the labour market.

Obtaining citizenship is generally associated with **long-term settlement in the Netherlands**; 65% of applicants that have not naturalised will eventually leave the Netherlands compared to a percentage of less than 25% of applicants that have naturalised. However, Dutch citizenship in some cases also proves to be a safeguard for individuals to move to other countries with the guarantee that they are able to return back to the Netherlands at any time.

Section 1: Legal and policy overview

Q1. With reference to international law, is your Member State a party to the:

a) 1961 UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness?

- Yes.
 No. *Please explain why:*

If no, please explain why:

b) 1997 European Convention on Nationality?

- Yes.
 No. *Please explain why:*

Q2. Which are the main legal instruments covering the acquisition of citizenship for third-country nationals in your Member State? For example, is the acquisition of citizenship laid out in the constitution?

Please explain in the form of a short, succinct narrative, starting from general principles to application rules. Please provide references to the main relevant laws and (name and date).

Please explain:

In The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands 2008, chapter two, article two, paragraph one, it is stated that Dutch nationality shall be regulated by Act of Parliament. This has been laid out in the Netherlands Nationality Act which is the legal instrument covering the acquisition of citizenship for third-country nationals in The Netherlands.¹ The Netherlands Nationality Act entered into force on 1 January 1985.

Q3. Have the laws and policies regarding third-country nationals' acquisition of citizenship in your country undergone any major changes in recent years which significantly changed the procedures or requirements of the acquisition of citizenship ²? If yes, what have been the main drivers for the change? (e.g. EU /national case law, changes in other aspects of (national) migration law or policy etc.) *Kindly note that the response should refer to the target group of the study only.*

- Yes.

Please elaborate:

There have been no major changes regarding third-country nationals' acquisition of citizenship in the Netherlands in recent years, however one development is relevant to mention:

Term for the application for Dutch citizenship after a serious offence extended from four to five years

As of 1 May 2018, the rehabilitation term has been extended from four to five years.³ This

¹ Government.nl, Netherlands Nationality Act, <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0003738/2018-08-01>. Last accessed on 12 August 2019.

² In the framework of this study, the aim is to identify and assess potential changes that may have occurred in the past five years. Please limit your analysis to the 2014-2019 period. However, should important changes occurred in 2013, you can still mention those and explain the impact on the current rules in place.

means that if a third country national wants to obtain Dutch citizenship, he or she must not have been convicted of any serious offences in the five years before the application and during the time his application is being processed. Before 1 May 2018, this term used to be four years.

The 5 year-term starts counting from the moment that the third-country national:

- has concluded any custodial sentence;
- has paid any financial penalty completely;
- has not committed further offences within the term set by court in the context of a conditional discharge.

The amendment applies to naturalisation applications as well as to option procedures.⁴ The application will also be rejected if at the time of filing or deciding there is a serious suspicion that the applicant has committed a crime subject to punishment.

No.

Q4. Have there been any major debates or national issues about third-country nationals holding or acquiring the citizenship of your Member State in recent years? If so, have these debates included the acquisition also of EU citizenship rights (such as right to vote, right to free movement including labour mobility, consular protection and right to protection, etc.)? Please specify in which framework these debates were held (e.g. policy-makers, media, general public).

Yes.

Please elaborate:

A topic that recently has been discussed within politics is the proposal to modernise the nationality act. As the altering of this act has been mentioned in the 2017 Coalition Agreement, the government will prepare proposals to modernise nationality law.⁵

In accordance with the Coalition Agreement, the State Secretary for Justice and Security informed the House of Representatives further of the modernisation of nationality law.⁶ The legislative change consists of two components that are being prepared together. This concerns broadening the possibility of possessing more than one nationality for future first generations of emigrants and immigrants. At the same time, there will be a compulsory time of choice for following generations that will actually lead to the retention of no more than one nationality. Having multiple nationalities, the person involved is subject to more than one legal system, which could lead to conflicting legal situations when principles under Dutch law are conflicting with those under a different legal system.⁷ Rights and obligations may conflict as a result of multiple nationalities. Therefore, the choice has been made to limit the constant and expanding possession of multiple nationalities this way. The scope and contents of this proposal are still under discussion.

Next to this, another topic that has been mentioned in the 2017 Coalition Agreement is the altering of the minimum level of Dutch which is required to pass the civic integration exam. The required level will be changed from A-2 to B-1. This will be part of the overall changes to the civic integration

³ Decision by the State Secretary for Justice and Security of 19/01/2018, number WBN 2018/1, pertaining to the amendment of the manual for the Netherlands Nationality Act (Rwn) 2003.

⁴ The option procedure is a short (three-month) simple procedure to obtain Dutch nationality. To be eligible, one must fall into the special category referred to in the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁵ Government.nl, Regeerakkoord 2017: 'Vertrouwen in de toekomst', https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2017/10/10/regeerakkoord-2017-vertrouwen-in-de-toekomst_. Last accessed on 25 September 2019.

⁶ Letter to parliament of 11 September 2019 about the modernisation process of nationality law: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/kamerstukken/2018/09/11/tk-proces-modernisering-nationaliteitsrecht/tk-proces-modernisering-nationaliteitsrecht.pdf>.

⁷ Mr C. Riezebos's answer on behalf of the State Secretary for Justice and Security, Mark Harbers, to the open letter of 18 October 2018 to the State Secretary about dual nationality on behalf of the Dutch Nationals Abroad (NIHB) organisation. Dutch Nationals Abroad (NIHB), 28/10/2019: <https://www.nihb.nl/overheid-formaliteiten/dubbele-nationaliteit/het-antwoord-op-de-open-brief-aan-staatssecretaris-harbers/>.

system which will enter into effect as of 1 January 2021.⁸ The proposed legislation would change the civic integration program required for persons entitled to international protection and their family members and family migrants who fall under the scope of the Civic integration act, as well as for applicants applying for permanent residence or Dutch nationality and dependents of Dutch nationals. Amongst others, under the new rules, foreign nationals would need to complete one of three new integration routes based on their existing language and educational capabilities. Also, municipalities would be in control of the implementation of the new the civic integration system.⁹

Another example of a recent issue and point of discussion among policymakers and relevant stakeholders about third-country nationals holding or acquiring the citizenship of the Netherlands, is the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the **Tjebbes case** of 12 March 2019.¹⁰ The judgment concerns the automatic loss of Dutch citizenship and will have consequences for Dutch nationality law.

The persons concerned in this case automatically lost Dutch nationality because they have lived outside the European Union for more than 10 years and did not renew their Dutch passport within this period of 10 years, while they also possessed a second nationality of a non-EU country. Dutch citizens possessing a second nationality of a non-EU country brought proceedings before courts in the Netherlands following the refusal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to examine their applications for renewal of their national passports. The Minister's refusal was based on the Law on Netherlands nationality, which provides that an adult loses his or her Dutch nationality if he or she also possesses a foreign nationality and if, after coming of age, he or she has his or her principal residence for an uninterrupted period of 10 years outside the Netherlands and the EU.¹¹ The Dutch Council of State did request the European Court of Justice to clarify if the Netherlands Nationality Act, according to which a Dutch national will lose the Dutch nationality by law, is compatible with European law.

The European Court stated that European Union law does not forbid automatic loss of nationality as indicated in the Netherlands Nationality Act, also if this means the loss of citizenship of the European Union. However, the European Court states that this automatic loss by law should always be in line with the principle of proportionality. The principle of proportionality requires an individual examination of the consequences of that loss of Dutch nationality for the persons concerned from the point of the view of EU law.¹²

The Dutch Council of State now has to scrutinize if such individual examinations will be possible within the framework of the Netherlands Nationality Act and they have to make a ruling which takes this ruling of European Court into account.

No.

Q5. From a legal perspective, is there a distinction between nationality and citizenship in your Member State? If so, what are the differences?

Yes.

No.

⁸ Kamerstukken II, 2018-2019, 32824 nr. 283 (in Dutch).

⁹ For more information and the specifications please visit: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-32824-283.html> (in Dutch), last accessed on 5 November 2019.

¹⁰ Court of Justice of the European Union, 'Judgment in Case C-221/17 Tjebbes and Others v Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken', <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2019-03/cp190026en.pdf>. Last accessed on 29 August 2019.

¹¹ Court of Justice of the European Union, 'Judgment in Case C-221/17 Tjebbes and Others v Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken', <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2019-03/cp190026en.pdf>. Last accessed on 29 August 2019.

¹² Court of Justice of the European Union, 'Judgment in Case C-221/17 Tjebbes and Others v Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken', <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2019-03/cp190026en.pdf>. Last accessed on 29 August 2019.

Q6. Is the acquisition of citizenship in your Member State based on the *ius sanguinis* or the *ius soli* principle, on a mixture of these principles, or on other principles?

Please check the appropriate box and explain.

***ius sanguinis*.**

Please explain:

***ius soli*.** Please explain:

Unconditional *ius soli*.

Conditional *ius soli*.¹³

Automatic double *ius soli*.¹⁴

Conditional double *ius soli*.¹⁵

Mixed *ius soli* and *sanguinis*.

Please explain:

In The Netherlands the acquisition of citizenship is based on mixed *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*. This is stated in the Netherlands Nationality Act, chapter two, article three. Clause one refers to the *ius sanguinis* principle and clause two and three to the *ius soli* principle.

1. A child shall be a Dutch national if the father or mother is a Dutch national at the time of his or her birth, or if the father or mother was a Dutch national who died before his or her birth.
2. A foundling found in the territory of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao or Saint Martin, or on a sea-going vessel or aircraft registered in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao or Saint Martin shall be deemed to be the child of a Dutch national unless it becomes apparent within five years of the day on which he or she was found that the child possesses a foreign nationality by birth.
3. A child shall be a Dutch national if he or she is born to a father or mother who has his or her principal place of residence in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao or Saint Martin at the time of his or her birth and who was born to a father or mother who himself or herself had his or her principal place of residence in one of those countries at the time of his or her birth, provided that the child has his or her principal place of residence in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao or Saint Martin at the time of his or her birth.¹⁶

Other.

Q7. In which modes can third-country nationals acquire the citizenship of your Member State? Please check all boxes that apply and briefly describe the main modalities).

Kindly note that the response should refer to the target group of the study only. This question links to Statistical Annex 1.2.

By ordinary naturalisation.

Please explain:

¹³ This means that certain conditions have to be fulfilled, e.g. minimum period of residence in the country of the parents.

¹⁴ This means that children born in the country to foreign citizens can automatically acquire citizenship at birth if at least one of their parents was also born in the country

¹⁵ This means that children born in the country to foreign citizens can acquire citizenship at birth if at least one of their parents was also born in the country under certain conditions, e.g. minimum period of residence for parents.

¹⁶ National Government, 'Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap' [the Netherlands Nationality Act], <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0003738/2018-08-01#Hoofdstuk2>, consulted on 8/8/2019

In order for third-country nationals to obtain citizenship through **ordinary naturalisation**, an application must be submitted in the municipality where the third-country national lives. The municipality will first examine whether the conditions for naturalisation are met. When the requirements are met, the municipality assists with submitting the application. Following this, the municipality will send the application to the IND together with the recommendation of the municipality. The IND will then verify if the conditions are met and takes a decision. In case the decision is positive, the third-country national will be put forward for granting Dutch citizenship.¹⁷ The statutory decision period of the entire naturalisation process is 12 months. See question 21 for further explanation about the procedure for ordinary naturalisation.

By special naturalisation (e.g. based on considerations such as historical / ethno-cultural considerations, for political or other discretionary reasons, investment scheme).
Please explain, briefly outlining the different types of special naturalisation available in your Member State:

Please explain:

Only in highly exceptional cases is possible in the Netherlands to grant naturalisation when certain requirements for the normal procedure, as specified in the Netherlands Nationality Act, have not been fulfilled.¹⁸ These cases should concern reasons that prevail above the legal requirements for naturalisation, for instance reasons of state interest or other important interests, such as international economic and cultural relations. Also in cases of severe omission or because of humanitarian reasons it is possible to deviate from the normal procedure. Please see question 28 for further explanation.

By declaration/notification.

Please explain:

Dutch nationality can also be acquired through the **option procedure** which is a different procedure than the naturalisation procedure. The option procedure is a fast and easy way to acquire Dutch citizenship. However, as specific conditions apply, not every third-country national can apply for the option statement. To be eligible to apply for naturalisation via the option procedure, the third-country national must fall under a certain category. Examples of such categories are:¹⁹

- persons born in the Netherlands and who have lived in the Netherlands since their birth with a valid residence permit;
- persons who have been married to a Dutch citizen for 3 years and lived in the Netherlands for 15 years.

The main differences between naturalisation and the option procedure are that:²⁰

- no citizenship test is required;
- the costs for the option procedure are lower;
- the option procedure is handled entirely by the municipality and not the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND);
- the option procedure is quicker.

¹⁷ IND, 'How to become a Dutch Citizen' (in Dutch), <https://ind.nl/Formulieren/5013.pdf> , last accessed on 12 August 2019.

¹⁸ Article 10, Netherlands Nationality Act.

¹⁹ IND, 'Option', <https://ind.nl/en/dutch-citizenship/Pages/Option.aspx#categories>, last accessed on 25 September 2019.

²⁰ Vlaardingen Municipality, What is the difference between naturalization and option?, https://www.vlaardingen.nl/Inwoners/Paspoort_rijbewijs_uittreksels/Uittreksels_en_afschriften/Naturalisatie_aanvraag_Nederlandse_nationaliteit/Vragen_en_antwoorden/Wat_is_het_verschil_tussen_naturalisatie_en_optie, last accessed on 7 October 2019.

In order for third-country nationals to obtain Dutch citizenship through option, the municipality first assesses whether somebody qualifies for the option procedure.²¹ When somebody qualifies for the option procedure, he or she then fills out the option statement in the municipality where he or she lives. Also, a form stating that the person concerned is willing to make a declaration of solidarity has to be filled out.²² Following this, the municipality assesses whether all the conditions are met. The municipality must make a decision within a period of 13 weeks. If all the conditions are met, the Mayor will confirm the option statement and an invitation will be sent to attend the naturalisation ceremony. During the ceremony the meaning of becoming a Dutch citizen is highlighted and the decision, stating that the person concerned has become a Dutch citizen (the option statement), will also be issued.²³ See also question 32 for further explanation of the naturalisation ceremony.

Other (e.g. reinstatement of former citizenship). *Please explain, briefly outlining any other modes of naturalisation not covered above:*

Q8. What is the most common / frequent way from those mentioned above for third-country nationals to acquire citizenship in your Member State?²⁴ *This question links to Statistical Annex 1.2.*

The most frequent way for third-country nationals to acquire citizenship in the Netherlands from those mentioned above (ordinary naturalisation or option) is via ordinary naturalisation. Please see statistical annex 1.2. for more information.

Section 2: Conditions and requirements for the acquisition of citizenship after birth through ordinary naturalisation

In cases where citizenship is not acquired at birth, what are the requirements and conditions that third-country nationals have to fulfil to obtain citizenship of your Member State? Please provide a brief overview of the conditions and requirements. Further details are to be provided in the subsequent questions.

Please explain:

In order to qualify for Dutch citizenship through **ordinary naturalisation** you need to be 18 years or older or have been married/ registered partnership before attaining that age. You need to have your residence in the Netherlands and have lived uninterruptedly in the Kingdom of the Netherlands for at least 5 years with a valid residence permit. Several exceptions apply to the 5 year requirement. In the Netherlands, the period of residence is based on legal residence. You need to be registered at the town hall in the municipality where you live in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) on your home address.

A condition for naturalisation is that the third-country national has passed (or has been exempted from) the civic **integration exam or naturalisation test** and has obtained the civic integration diploma.

The naturalisation test consists of the same components as the integration exam, except for the participation statement. Only third-country nationals who had no earlier obligation to pass the integration exam have to pass the naturalisation test.

During the naturalisation ceremony, the third-country national has to make a 'declaration of solidarity' verbally.

²¹ For the conditions in order to obtain Dutch citizenship through option see: IND, 'Option', <https://ind.nl/en/dutch-citizenship/Pages/Option.aspx#categories>, last accessed on 12 August 2019.

²² The declaration of solidarity is made during the naturalisation ceremony.

²³ IND, 'Option' (in Dutch), <https://ind.nl/en/dutch-citizenship/Pages/Option.aspx>, last accessed on 14 August 2019

²⁴ Please note that statistics on the number of third-country nationals who have acquired the citizenship of your country each year between 2014-2018, differentiated by the grounds of acquiring citizenship are requested in the Statistical Annex.

With regard to **public order and security**, there can be no ongoing criminal proceedings against the third-country national in the Netherlands or abroad when applying for naturalisation. The third-country national cannot pose a threat to public order and security in the Netherlands or pose a threat to the safety of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The period concerning criminal proceedings which is taken into account is the 5 years prior to the naturalisation application up to the moment that the decision has been made.

The applicant's economic/financial situation, standard of living or the housing situation are not taken into account when applying for ordinary naturalisation.

Please note that the questions below only refer to cases when the primary grounds of acquisition of citizenship is through ordinary naturalisation (i.e. the legal process whereby a third-country national who is legally present on the territory of a Member State may acquire citizenship of an EU Member State. A new migrant is described as a third country national who does not have a pre-existing historical tie with the Member State (ethnic, family, historical). The conditions and requirements in place for second- or third-generation migrants and those migrants with special (e.g. ethnical or linguistic) ties to the country are not covered.

Section 2.1 Eligibility

Period of residence

Q9. After how many years or months of (interrupted/continuous) residence in your country can a third-country national acquire the citizenship of your Member State?

Please explain:

In order to qualify for Dutch citizenship through ordinary naturalisation, you need to have your residence in the Netherlands and have lived uninterruptedly in the Kingdom of the Netherlands for at least 5 years with a valid residence permit. Several exceptions apply to the 5 year requirement, for example in the case of 3 years of marriage/registered partnership with a Dutch citizen and continuous cohabitation (for 3 years) or in the case of a stateless persons.²⁵

Q9a: Is this period of residence based on legal residence (i.e. registration at the city hall or in a population registry) or is habitual residence (e.g. proved by house rental, school attendance, tax reports) in the Member State also counted?

Legal residence required.

Please elaborate:

In the Netherlands, the period of residence is based on legal residence. You need to be registered at the town hall in the municipality where you live in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) on your home address. Everyone living in the Netherlands is required to be registered at their home address.

- Presence in the country sufficient
- No residence / presence in the Member State is required and citizenship is granted upon entry (e.g. investor schemes).
- Other.

²⁵ For a detailed description of all the exceptions please see: IND, 'Exceptions to the 5-year term naturalisation', <https://ind.nl/en/Pages/Exceptions-5-year-term-nationalisation.aspx>, last accessed on 25 September 2019.

Q9b: Is this period of residence based on effective residence (i.e. physical presence for a regular and extended period in the territory) or is holding a residence permit for the required timeframe sufficient?

Yes, physical presence necessary.

Please elaborate:

The period of residence is based on effective and uninterrupted residence. The third-country national needs to have their residence in the Netherlands which means that the centre of the activities needs to be in the Netherlands. When a third-country national moves their residence to a place outside the Netherlands, the residence permit can be revoked or not be extended.²⁶

No, holding a permit is sufficient.

Other:

Q9c: What proof (e.g. documentary evidence) is required to demonstrate that the minimum period of residence has been met?

Please elaborate:

To demonstrate that the minimum period of residence has been met the municipality checks the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) to determine how long the third-country national lives in the Netherlands. When it is not entirely clear from the BRP or the residence permit if the person has lived uninterruptedly in the Kingdom of the Netherlands for at least 5 years²⁷, the municipality can ask the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) for a notification in respect of admission appeal (Bericht Omtrent Toelating (BOT) to verify this.

Q9d: Can the period of residence be interrupted? If yes, how long can this interruption last?

Yes.

No

Please elaborate

The period of residence cannot be interrupted. Residence means that the centre of the activities is in the Netherlands. The third-country national needs to have an uninterrupted 5-year stay in the Netherlands before submitting the application for ordinary naturalisation. This means that in those 5 years you have not stayed outside the Netherlands for 6 or more consecutive months, or 3 years in a row for 4 or more consecutive months.²⁸

Other:

Pre-existing legal residence status

Q10. What pre-existing legal residence status of the citizenship applicant is accepted?

²⁶ IND, 'Main residence in the Netherlands', <https://ind.nl/en/Pages/main-residence.aspx>. Last accessed on 15 August 2019.

²⁷ Please see question 9 for the exceptions to the 5-year term.

²⁸ IND, 'Permanent residence after a 5-year stay in the Netherlands', <https://ind.nl/en/permanent-residence/Pages/permanent-residence-after-5-years.aspx>. Last accessed on 25 September 2019.

Please also indicate for how long each of the given legal statuses has to be held in order for the third-country national to be able to acquire the citizenship of your country. For temporary permits, please indicate to what extent the number of years the third-country national possesses such a permit count towards being granted access to citizenship.

- Permanent residence permit. *Number of years to get this permanent status and number of years necessary to hold it for citizenship acquisition: 5*
- Refugee status. *Number of years: 5*
- Temporary residence permit. *Number of years: 5*
- Other protection statuses. *Number of years:*
- Other status:

Please elaborate:

As mentioned in question 9, stateless individuals can apply for naturalisation after 3 years.

Section 2.2 Conditions

Language

Q11. Is knowledge of the national language(s) required for all naturalisation grounds, and if so, what is the required level?²⁹

- Yes.

Please state the required level:

Knowledge of the Dutch language is required for becoming a Dutch citizen. A condition for naturalisation is that the third-country national has passed the naturalisation test (the civic integration exam) and obtaining the diploma (or has been exempted from this obligation). Learning Dutch is part of the integration process. The minimum level of Dutch which is required to pass the civic integration exam is A-2.

- No.

Q11a. If yes, how is this proven or evaluated? What evidence is required, and which authority is responsible for assessment (e.g. ministry officials, language experts, private language institutions contracted by state, etc.)?

Please explain:

The knowledge of the Dutch language can be proven by the civic integration diploma which the third-country national must obtain in order to qualify for Dutch citizenship through ordinary naturalisation. The responsible authority for the civic integration exam is the Executive Agency for Education (DUO). The integration exam consists of several different components; one of them is the language exam. Please see question 12 for a description of the integration exam. There are several exceptions to the general rule that the third-country national has to pass the A-2 language exam as part of the integration exam: for example persons that completed a school or university degree in Dutch are exempted, as well as persons that passed the State Exam Dutch as a second language (NT-2), level I or II.³⁰ Also persons can be exempted on medical grounds or when they have proved that they made efforts to prepare for the exam but are not capable.³¹

²⁹ Please indicate the level according to the Common European Framework of References for Languages -CEFR (A1-C2)

³⁰ Executive Agency for Education, 'Integration in the Netherlands', <https://www.inburgeren.nl/en/integration-in-the-netherlands/choosing-course.jsp>. Last accessed on 15 August 2019.

³¹ For all exemptions please see: https://ind.nl/Paginas/Inburgering-in-Nederland.aspx#Inburgeringsexamen_voor_naturalisatie (in Dutch) last accessed on 21 October.

Q11b. If your Member State uses a language test, has this test ever been evaluated, e.g. has the test led to better knowledge of the national language(s)?

Yes.

Please explain:

The Civic integration Act has been evaluated in 2018³². The subject of the evaluation is the effect of the Act (output), not the effects on integration (outcome). A study of the outcome will appear next year (2020). The percentage of participants of the different components of the civic integration exam who pass is measured regularly. Whether the language course or test has led to better knowledge of the Dutch language can only be judged by the teacher of the course who can compare the level at the beginning of the course with the level after completing the course/ participating in the exam.

No.

Citizenship tests and commitments

Q12. Are citizenship applicants required to pass a citizenship or integration test for all naturalisation grounds? *Please note that this could also include oral interviews.*

Yes.

Please outline the main components of the test:

Most third-country nationals are obliged to pass the civic integration exam within three years after they get a permit for a non-temporary purpose. This obligation is laid down in the Civic Integration act.

The integration exam consists of several different components:³³

1. A language test (reading, listening, writing, speaking on A-2 level)
2. Knowledge of Dutch Society
 - knowledge of Dutch society
 - orientation on the Dutch labour market
3. The participation statement

The participation statement

The participation statement is a statement to be signed by the applicant in the first year after the start of the three year period . The procedure consists of an introduction to Dutch core values by the municipality, followed by the signature of a participation statement. By doing so, the applicant states that he or she will actively participate in Dutch society and declares that he/she has been informed of, and will respect, the values and basic rules of Dutch society.³⁴

³² Significant: Inburgering: Systeemwereld versus leefwereld: Evaluatie Wet inburgering 2013

³³ <https://ind.nl/en/Forms/3006.pdf>

³⁴ Government.nl, 'Participation statement to be mandatory part of civic integration exam', <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2016/07/08/participation-statement-to-be-mandatory-part-of-civic-integration-exam>. Last accessed on 20 August 2019.

Orientation on the Dutch labour market

The Orientation on the Dutch Labour Market (ONA) exam is about working and finding work in the Netherlands. If you have a job, you may receive an exemption for ONA.³⁵

In order to qualify for Dutch citizenship through **ordinary naturalisation**, applicants are obliged to obtain the naturalisation test. There are several exemptions for this, for example if the applicant is already in the possession of a diploma State Exam Dutch as a second language (NT-2), level I or II, or if the applicant received an education in the Dutch language that was issued at a specific Dutch diploma or certificate.³⁶

People have passed the naturalisation test when they have passed the integration exam. After a minimum of 5 years residence they can apply for naturalisation, if they meet all the other requirements. Only people who had no earlier obligation to pass the integration exam have to pass the naturalisation test.

This test consists of several different components:³⁷

1. A language test (reading, listening, writing, speaking on A-2 level)
2. Knowledge of Dutch Society
 - knowledge of Dutch society
 - orientation on the Dutch labour market.

These are the same components on the same level as the integration exam, except the participation statement.

No.

Q12a. If yes, has the citizenship test ever been evaluated?

Yes.

No.

The citizenship test has not been evaluated with regards to naturalisation.

Q13. Is the applicant required to legally or symbolically commit to certain values or norms (such as human rights, democracy, quality and the rule of law) for all naturalisation grounds and if so, which ones?

Yes.

Please explain what these values are and what is expected from the applicant.

³⁵ For more information visit: Inburgeren.nl, 'Taking the integration exam', <https://www.inburgeren.nl/en/taking-the-integration-exam/orientation-dutch-labour-market-exam.jsp>. Last accessed on 20 August 2019.

³⁶ For all the exceptions please visit IND, 'Integration in the Netherlands', <https://ind.nl/en/Pages/Integration-in-the-netherlands.aspx#Civic-integration-for-naturalisation>. Last accessed on 19 August 2019. And 'Besluit Naturalisatietoets' (in Dutch), <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0013604/2013-01-01>. Last accessed on 26 September 2019.

³⁷ <https://ind.nl/en/Forms/3006.pdf>

As mentioned in question 12, persons who are obliged to pass the civic integration exam under the Civic integration act, have to sign the participation statement where the person states that he or she will actively participate in Dutch society and declares that they will respect the values and basic rules of Dutch society.

This following text is part of the participation statement:

'The Netherlands is a democracy and a constitutional State. This means that everyone has the same rights and that everyone must abide by the same rules. In the Netherlands, freedom, equality and solidarity play a central role. These values correspond to rights that you may call upon. These values can only be maintained if everyone actively contributes towards society. Participation in the Netherlands is very important.'³⁸

In addition, it is mandatory for the third-country national to participate in the naturalisation ceremony. The naturalisation ceremony focuses on the significance of Dutch nationality and solidarity with Dutch society. It also focuses on the rights (for example the right to vote) and obligations (for example to be sufficiently integrated) that come with Dutch citizenship.³⁹ Please see question 32 for more information about the naturalisation ceremony.

No.

Q14. Are applicants required to pledge formally allegiance to your Member State (e.g. oath of allegiance?) If yes, does this apply to all naturalisation grounds? Please explain the differences.

Yes.

Please explain:

As also outlined in question 13, during the naturalisation ceremony, the person applying for naturalisation has to make the 'declaration of solidarity' verbally. By making this declaration, the third-country national agrees that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands also apply to him or her. There are two versions of the declaration of solidarity.

The oath, for those who are religious:

'I swear that I will respect the constitutional order of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, its liberties and rights and I swear that I will faithfully fulfil the duties which this citizenship imposes on me.' Followed by: 'So help me God.'

Or for those who so choose, the (non-religious) solemn affirmation:

'I declare that I will respect the constitutional order of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, its liberties and rights and I declare and promise that I will faithfully fulfil the duties which this citizenship imposes on me.' Followed by: 'This I declare and promise.'

³⁸ Government.nl, 'Regulation civic integration', <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0020657/2017-10-01/#Bijlage7>. Last accessed on 20 August 2019.

³⁹ IND, 'Naturalisation Day', <https://ind.nl/en/about-ind/background-themes/Pages/Naturalisation-Day.aspx>. Last accessed on 22 August 2019.

The Mayor thereby issues the decision of Dutch citizenship to which that person then officially becomes a Dutch citizen.⁴⁰

No.

Good conduct

Q15. Is the third-country national expected to fulfil any requirements regarding good conduct (e.g. clean criminal record, fulfilment of civic requirements such as payment of taxes), public order, public health and if so, which ones?

Yes.

Please explain:

With regard **to public order and security**, there can be no ongoing criminal proceedings against the third-country national in the Netherlands or abroad when applying for naturalisation. The third-country national cannot pose a threat to public order and security in the Netherlands or pose a threat to the safety of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The period concerning criminal proceedings which is taken into account is the 5 years prior to the naturalisation application up to the moment that the decision has been made. The condition which applies is that the third-country national has not been convicted or sentenced to a conditional discharge in the Netherlands or abroad for a crime.⁴¹ This includes:

- Every custodial sentence (including prison sentence), regardless of the duration of the sentence.
- An alternative sanction (including training or community service), regardless of the duration of the sentence.
- Every financial penalty (including fines, transactions or confiscation orders) of €810 or more.
- A series of multiple financial penalties (including fines, transactions or confiscation orders) of €405 or more, with a total amount of €1,215 or more.

The 5 year-term starts counting from the moment that the third-country national:

- Has concluded any custodial sentence;
- Has paid any financial penalty completely;
- Has not committed further offences within the term set by court in the context of a conditional discharge.⁴²

No.

Q15a. If yes, what proof (e.g. documentary evidence) is required to demonstrate that the criteria for good conduct has been met?

Please elaborate:

A statement on residence and good behaviour is required to demonstrate that the criteria for good conduct have been met.

Economic resources

⁴⁰ IND, 'Naturalisation Day', <https://ind.nl/en/about-ind/background-themes/Pages/Naturalisation-Day.aspx>. Last accessed on 22 August 2019.

⁴¹ IND, 'Naturalisation' <https://ind.nl/en/dutch-citizenship/Pages/Naturalisation.aspx>. Last accessed on 22 August 2019.

⁴² IND, 'Naturalisation' <https://ind.nl/en/dutch-citizenship/Pages/Naturalisation.aspx>. Last accessed on 23 August 2019.

Q16. Is the applicant's economic/financial situation or standard of living taken into account and if so, how (e.g. a minimum income level and assets)? Does this apply to all naturalisation grounds? Please explain the differences.

- Yes.
- No.

Q16a. If yes, what proof (e.g. documentary evidence) is required to demonstrate that the minimum income level / assets have been met?

Q17. Is the third-country national's housing situation taken into account?

- Yes.
- No.

Q17a: If yes, what proof (e.g. documentary evidence) is required to demonstrate that any housing requirements have been met?

Others

Q18. Are there any other requirements not listed above?

- Yes.
- No.

Section 2.3 Security

Q19. Are there any specific exclusion criteria (e.g. threats to national security and public order)?

- Yes.

Please explain:

As described in question 15, with regard to public order and security, there can be no ongoing criminal proceedings against the third-country national in the Netherlands or abroad when applying for naturalisation. The third-country national cannot pose a threat to public order and security in the Netherlands or pose a threat to the safety of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

- No.

Section 2.4 Specific groups of third-country nationals

Q20. Are the above-mentioned requirements different for specific groups of third-country nationals, such as the groups listed below. For each group, please briefly explain the main differences that apply:

- a. Refugees
- b. Other beneficiaries of international protection statuses
- c. Specific categories of legal migrants
- d. Other groups that are significantly represented in your Member State, incl. stateless persons

Q20a. Refugees

Please explain:

In general, the above mentioned requirements do not differ for specific groups of third-country nationals. In addition to Q19, for refugees, the naturalisation process can be terminated in case serious suspicion has arisen that the refugee has engaged in one of the crimes listed in Article 1F of the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, such as crimes against peace and democracy and war crimes.⁴³

Q20b. Other beneficiaries of international protection statuses

Please explain:

Stateless individuals and resident permit holders who apply for naturalisation have to pay a reduced fee of €655,-⁴⁴ (instead of €881,-).⁴⁵ When individuals apply for a 'joint procedure' of naturalisation in case of a marriage/registered partnership/continuous cohabitation without a marriage or registered partnership, they have to pay a reduced fee of €1124,-.⁴⁶

Q20c. Specific categories of legal migrants e.g. people with disabilities or people in old age.

Please explain:

N/A

Q20d. Other groups that are **significantly represented in your Member State (e.g. stateless persons, minors, investors, citizens of neighbouring countries).**

Please explain:

Stateless persons can apply for naturalisation after 3 years instead of 5 years.

(Stateless) individuals coming from the Maluku Islands are sometimes exempted from paying the naturalisation fee, depending on whether they fall under the 'Act regarding the position of individuals coming from the Maluku Islands'⁴⁷ Notwithstanding, these above mentioned groups do not form a significant group.

⁴³ Article 9-1-a. par 2, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁴⁴ Fees have been adjusted to the current pricing levels which can be found at: IND, 'Costs', <https://ind.nl/Paginas/Kosten.aspx>, last accessed on 17 October 2019.

⁴⁵ Art. 3.2 Aliens Decree 2000.

⁴⁶ Art. 3.3 Aliens Decree 2000.

⁴⁷ Government.nl, 'Act regarding the position of individuals coming from the Maluku Islands', <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0003052/2017-03-01> (in Dutch), last accessed on 17 October 2019.

Section 3: Procedural aspects for the acquisition of citizenship in the Member State

Please note that, consistent with Section 2, the questions below again only refer to cases when the primary grounds of acquisition of citizenship is through naturalisation based on a minimum period of residence in the country (i.e. 'ordinary naturalisation', not the conditions and requirements in place for second- or third-generation migrants and those migrants with special (e.g. ethnical or linguistic) ties to the country).

Q21. Please briefly describe the procedure in place for third-country nationals to obtain citizenship through ordinary naturalisation.

Please describe:

- In order for third-country nationals to obtain citizenship, first an application for naturalisation must be submitted in person in the municipality where the third-country national lives.⁴⁸ When submitting the application, a fee for the naturalisation procedure has to be paid.
- The municipality will then examine all required documents and the identity and nationality of the applicant. Following this, the municipality will look at whether the conditions for naturalisation (see Q24) are met and gives a recommendation to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) when sending the application to the IND.
- Subsequently, the IND will verify if the conditions are met and makes a decision.

Positive decision

- In case the decision is positive, the third-country national will be put forward for granting Dutch citizenship. This process is carried out by means of a Royal Decree. This Royal Decree will be sent to the State Secretary of Justice and Security, who offers it to His Majesty the King for signing. The naturalisation is established by the signature of His Majesty the King. The IND will send a letter informing the third-country national of the positive decision. Moreover, the IND will send the decision to the municipality in which the third-country national lives.
- Following this, the municipality will send an invitation to the third-country national for attending the naturalisation ceremony, during which the naturalisation decision will be presented. Also, during the ceremony the meaning of becoming a Dutch citizen is explained and the so-called declaration of solidarity has to be made, in which the third-country national agrees that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands also apply to him or her (see Q14). At the date of the ceremony the decision comes into force, retroactively to the date when the decision was signed. It is obligatory to attend the ceremony within one year from the date the naturalisation decision has been signed. If the third-country national fails to attend (in time), the naturalisation decision cannot be presented and thus Dutch citizenship cannot be granted. In any case, a new application can be submitted.
- After having attended the naturalisation ceremony, the municipality will send a form to the IND which states that the third-country national has been granted the Dutch nationality (the so-called 'terugmeldformulier').
- In case the third-country national is obliged to renounce the current nationality, the renunciation procedure will be initiated after the presentation of the naturalisation decision during the naturalisation ceremony. If the third-country national does not actively renounce the current nationality despite being obliged to, the IND may revoke the Dutch citizenship.

Negative decision

- When the decision is negative, the IND informs the third-country national in a letter. There is the possibility to review this decision.

The statutory decision period of the entire naturalisation process is 12 months.

Q21a. Are children automatically naturalised once their parents are granted citizenship?

Yes.

Please explain:

⁴⁸ Article 7, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

No. However, it is relatively easy for children to naturalise together with a parent.

Q22. What public authorities/agencies are involved in procedures for third-country nationals' acquisition of the citizenship of your Member State?

Please mention and describe their roles at each step of the process in order to identify the authorities by which the application is introduced and those taking the decisions.

Please explain:

The municipality is involved in the first steps of the process, as the third-country national submits the application in the municipality where he/she lives. The municipality also advises the third-country national on the requirements and necessary documents for the naturalisation application. The municipality sends the application to the IND after having received the necessary documents and application fee and after having researched the eligibility of the application. The municipality advises the IND of whether or not there are any objections to naturalisation. Also, in case there are objections, the municipality advises the third-country national to not apply for naturalisation. In case the third-country national still wishes to apply, he/she is asked to sign a declaration in which is stated that he/she is aware of not fulfilling all requirements, and fees will not be repaid in case the application is rejected. When receiving the application from the municipality, the IND examines the requirements when they receive the application from the municipality and takes the decision. After the IND informs the municipality of the decision, the municipality invites the third-country national for the naturalisation ceremony in case the decision is positive. Please see Q21 for more information on the naturalisation procedure.

Q23. Are these procedures digitised? Can applications for citizenship be made online?

Yes.

No.

The naturalisation application always needs to be submitted in person. However, more and more municipalities (such as Amsterdam and the Hague) can digitally send the naturalisation application to the IND.⁴⁹

Q24. What documentation is required in order to submit the application (e.g. passport, birth certificate) (in addition to the evidence reported to meet the conditions set out in Section 2)?

Please explain:

When submitting the application, the following documentation is required:⁵⁰

-Passport or another valid travel document

-Valid residence permit (permanent residence permit or temporary residence permit with a non-temporary purpose of stay) or other proof of lawful residence.

-Legalised birth certificate from the country of origin of the third-country national (unless the third-country national has already been registered in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) on the basis of a legalised birth certificate).

-Civic integration diploma or other proof of civic integration (except when third-country nationals are exempted from this requirement)

⁴⁹ For more information about the digital applications see: <https://nvvb.nl/nl/communicatie/nieuwsberichten/digitalisering-van-dienstverlening-tussen-ind-en-g/> (in Dutch). Last accessed on 3 October 2019.

⁵⁰ Article 7, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

Moreover, the following documents need to be signed when the application is submitted:

-A statement on residence and good behaviour, in order to state among other things that in the 5 years prior to the naturalisation application the third-country national has not been convicted or sentenced (see Q15).

-‘Statement of allegiance’ in order to state he/she is willing to make the declaration of solidarity during the naturalisation ceremony.

-In case the third-country national is obliged to renounce the current nationality in order to become a Dutch citizen, a declaration for this has to be signed.

If necessary, a request for establishing or changing the name can be submitted. This is for example the case when someone does not have a first or last name, or when one has multiple names without distinction between the first and last names.

In some cases other documents are required, such as:

-Legalised marriage certificate or a certificate of registered partnership

-Proof to have continuously lived with a Dutch citizen for 3 or more years.

In case the third-country national has no passport or birth certificate and is not exempted from submitting these documents, he/she has the possibility to appeal for lack of documentary evidence.⁵¹ In some cases the third-country national then has the chance to show that it is not possible to get a passport or birth certificate.

Q25. What is the legally prescribed maximum time period for the procedure, if applicable, and how long do procedures take in practice? If the different stages of the procedure have maximum time periods (e.g., registration, application, etc.) please differentiate. Are certain types of cases prioritised or fast-tracked, and if so, which ones?

Please explain: The legally prescribed maximum time period for the entire naturalisation procedure is 12 months.⁵² However, it is in some cases (for example when further research is required) possible to extend this term twice with six months. The procedure starts when the fees for the naturalisation application have been paid (mostly this is when the application is submitted) and ends when the naturalisation decision is presented during the naturalisation ceremony. In the yearly report of the Ministry of Justice and Security is stated that in practice 68% of the naturalisation procedures in 2018 was decided upon within the legally prescribed maximum time period.⁵³ This was, among other reasons, because of the fact that staff at the IND was allocated to tasks with higher priorities, which delayed the decision time period on naturalisation applications.

Very little cases are prioritised or fast-tracked; this is determined on a case-by-case basis and thus not legally defined. An example of cases that are sometimes prioritised are joint applications that seek to grant citizenship to minors and their parents. Specifically, this concerns cases in which minors are 17 years old and therefore almost of age (18 years in the Netherlands). When these cases are not prioritised, it could occur that the minor already is of age once the naturalisation application is handled. This would mean that joint granting of citizenship is no longer possible and a new application should be submitted. To avoid this, the IND attempts to prioritise these cases of 17-year-old minors and their family members.

Q26. What are the costs for the application for citizenship (in €)? Please note that this excludes costs for the translation of documents, trainings for language proficiency, etc. Please specify whether different costs apply to different grounds.

Please explain:

⁵¹ Article 7, paragraph 3.5.5, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁵² Article 9, paragraph 4, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁵³ VI Justice and Security – Governmental yearly report (Rijksjaarverslag), p. 85.

The costs for an application for naturalisation are:⁵⁴

For one person: €881

Together with a partner: €1124

For a child under 18 becoming a Dutch citizen together with a parent €130

For a stateless person or holder of a residence permit asylum €655

For a stateless person or holder of a residence permit asylum together with a partner €899

Q27. Are there any other evidence requirements to be fulfilled for a final decision to be taken on the citizenship application (in addition to those set out above, e.g. language certificate)?

No, there are no further evidence requirements than the ones mentioned in Q24 and in section 2.

Q28. To what extent is discretion an element of the procedure/decision-making process? Is there absolute discretion or conditional discretion?⁵⁵

Please explain:

Only in highly exceptional cases it is possible in the Netherlands to grant naturalisation when certain requirements for the normal procedure, as specified in the Netherlands Nationality Act, have not been fulfilled.⁵⁶ These cases should concern reasons that prevail above the legal requirements for naturalisation, for instance reasons of state interest or other important interests, such as international economic and cultural relations. Also in cases of severe omission or because of humanitarian reasons it is possible to deviate from the normal procedure. An example of state interest is enabling a top foreign athlete to become a Dutch citizen in order to compete for a Dutch national team, rather than to wait until the athlete fulfills the requirement of the period of legal residence (five years). However, certain requirements will always have to be met in order to become a Dutch citizen, such as that the third-country national should not pose a threat to public order or national security. Moreover, the procedure for becoming a Dutch citizen based on exceptional circumstances is stricter than the normal procedure for naturalisation, since the Council of State⁵⁷ is involved in the decision procedure. In the case of top athletes, the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport also advises on the case.

Q29. What challenges if any have been experienced regarding the verification of the identity of naturalisation applicants?

⁵⁴ Article 13, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁵⁵ Absolute discretion means that the state may leave authorities absolute discretion to grant naturalisation to applicants, whether or not they meet the legal requirements. Conditional discretion means authorities only have limited grounds to reject applicants who meet the legal requirements.

⁵⁶ Article 10, Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁵⁷ The Council of State (Dutch: Raad van State) is an advisory body in the Netherlands to the government and Dutch parliament. It advises on proposed legislation and is the highest administrative court.

Please explain stating how these were addressed and any good practices:

Inability to meet the standard of evidence

In order to apply for naturalisation, the applicant has to demonstrate his/her identity and nationality. As explained in Q24, in case the third-country national has no valid foreign passport or legalised birth certificate in order to verify his/her identity and is not exempt from submitting these documents⁵⁸, he/she has the possibility to appeal for lack of documentary evidence. In order for this request to be approved by the IND, the third-country national has to show it is not possible to get a passport and/or birth certificate. The IND then determines if the third-country national is indeed unable to meet the standard of evidence. The burden of proof lies with the applicant, though.

As becomes apparent from interviews with experts from the IND⁵⁹, the process of verifying the identity and nationality of naturalisation applicants when they apply for lack of documentary evidence forms a challenge for the IND. This is mostly because the IND has to have information about documentary procedures of all countries in the world. Therefore the IND constantly updates the information on the country of origin in order to research every case where a person appeals for lack of documentary evidence thoroughly. Through the years the IND has developed good experience in judging the claims of applicants for lack of documentary evidence.

An applicant with lack of documentary evidence has to prove his identity in another way. It is apparent that it is harder for the IND to check the identity if no documents are provided, although in most cases the IND has information about the identity in the file it has collected during the immigration procedure.

Q30. Is there a right of appeal or basis for legal challenge if citizenship is refused? If yes, do the authorities have to provide information about the grounds for refusal?

Yes.

Please explain:

Yes, there is a right of appeal. Once the IND has informed the third-country national that the decision on the naturalisation application is negative, the third-country national can submit an application for review at the IND. In case the application for review is rejected by the IND, it is possible for the third-country national to appeal to the court.

According to the Netherlands Nationality Act⁶⁰, it is recommended that the municipality estimates together with the applicant to what extent the application is feasible, in order to prevent disappointments. Thus, in case the applicant does not (yet) fulfill the requirements for application, the municipality should advise against submitting the application. In case the third-country national still wishes to apply for naturalisation, he/she is asked to sign a declaration in which is stated that he/she is aware of not fulfilling all requirements, and fees will not be repaid in case the application is rejected.

No.

Q31. What are the most common grounds for a negative citizenship application decision? If possible, please list the top 5 reasons. Grounds could include insufficient language skills, insufficient period of residence, criminal record, unestablished identity.

⁵⁸ For example applicants for international protection are exempted from submitting (certain) documents.

⁵⁹ Interviews with IND experts on 21 and 22 October 2019 in the Hague.

⁶⁰ Article 7, paragraph 3.1, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

Precise information on the most common grounds for a negative citizenship application is not available. However, experts within the IND estimate that generally the most common grounds for a negative citizenship application are:

- the third-country national is not able to prove identity or nationality (unless he/she is applicable for international protection);
- the third-country national poses a threat to public order or national security;
- the third-country national does not fulfil the right term for lawful residence;
- the third-country national does not possess a valid residence permit.

Q32. Does your Member State organise a citizenship ceremony? If yes, is participation in such a ceremony mandatory or voluntary?

Yes.

Please explain:

Yes, in the Netherlands a citizenship ceremony is organised and it is mandatory to participate in this ceremony. During this ceremony, the meaning of becoming a Dutch citizen is highlighted, in terms of rights and obligations. Moreover, the third-country national has to make the 'declaration of solidarity' verbally (see Q14). By making this declaration, the third-country national agrees that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands also apply to him/her. This declaration can only be done in person during the naturalisation ceremony. If this is not done, the third-country national cannot become a Dutch citizen.⁶¹ Following the declaration, the naturalisation decision will be presented. Only in exceptional circumstances participation in the ceremony is not required.

No.

Support provided during the application process

Q33. Does your Member States provide information and/ or encourages third-country nationals to consider applying for citizenship?

Yes.

Please explain (incl. good practice example if available):

Information on how to become a Dutch citizen is available on most municipality websites and the website of the Immigration- and Naturalisation Service (<https://ind.nl/en>). Moreover, on the website of the Government of the Netherlands (www.government.nl) information is provided. As is stated in Q35, information is provided throughout the application process. However, third-country nationals are not encouraged to consider applying for citizenship.

No.

Q34. Is governmental support provided to applicants during the application process?⁶² Have any good practices been identified in your Member State?

Yes.

⁶¹ Article 7, paragraph 3.13, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁶² For the purpose of this study, only support under the control of the state should be included here (e.g. websites, telephone hotline), i.e. support by NGOs or private service providers is excluded unless contracted by the state.

Please explain (incl. good practice example if available):

Municipalities and the IND provide support throughout the application process, in the sense that they provide relevant information and advise the applicant concerning required actions. Support is available in person during appointments, or via phone or e-mail. No specific good practices regarding governmental support during the application process have been identified.

No.

Q35. Does your Member State organise, support or finance integration measures (classes, training, etc.) to facilitate the acquisition of citizenship? If yes, please specify whether these are prescribed by law.

Yes.

No.

In the Netherlands no specific integration measures in order to facilitate the acquisition of citizenship are organised, supported or financed.

There are, however, integration measures for newcomers, independently of whether they are aspiring to apply for Dutch citizenship or not. For example, third-country nationals are responsible for preparing for the integration exam themselves, whether they fall under the scope of the Civic Integration Act or not. There is no obligation to attend an integration course. Costs for a civic integration course and the civic integration examination must also be paid by the third-country nationals themselves. It is possible to borrow money to finance the civic integration programme; for third-country nationals this is up to EUR 10,000. Under the Civic Integration Act persons entitled to international protection and their family members who pass the examination or are exempted from the obligation to pass the exam do not have to repay the loan. Also, third-country nationals are required to complete a participation procedure, in which newcomers are familiarised with the rights and responsibilities and with the values that are fundamental to Dutch society. However, these measures are not directed at facilitating the acquisition of citizenship.

Section 4: Dual citizenship

Q36. Is the third-country national required to renounce his/her other citizenship in order to acquire or hold citizenship in your Member State? *This question links to Statistical Annex 1.4. If your answer is 'no' (i.e. dual citizenship is possible), kindly provide national data on dual citizenship as requested.*

Yes.

Please explain the reasoning and how this is enforced:

In principle the third-country national has to renounce his/her other nationality.⁶³ However, there are exceptions to the rule of renunciation (see Q37 for more information). In case these exceptions do not apply to the third-country national, he/she is required to sign a declaration when submitting the application for naturalisation, in which is stated that he/she is willing to renounce the other nationality. Before signing, the third-country national is informed about the required actions and possible costs involved in the renunciation procedure. Once Dutch citizenship is granted, the renunciation procedure starts.

No.

Other.

⁶³ Article 9, paragraph 1b, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

Q37. Is the requirement to renounce dependent on the person's other citizenship and are there exemptions from this requirement, for example for third-country nationals from third countries that do not allow a renunciation of citizenship ?

If yes, please elaborate:

In general, everyone has to renounce his other nationality when acquiring Dutch nationality. There are some exceptions to this general rule: ⁶⁴

- The third-country national automatically loses his/her nationality when applying for Dutch citizenship;
- the legislation of the country of origin of the third-country national does not allow him/her to give up their nationality;
- the third-country national is married to or in a registered partnership with a Dutch citizen;
- the third-country national is a minor (younger than 18 years);
- the third-country national is holder of an asylum residence permit;
- when giving up the nationality the third-country national will lose certain rights (e.g. a high sum of money can be lost because the law of succession no longer applies to him/her);
- the third-country national is national of a state that is not recognized by the Netherlands;
- the third-country national has to fulfil (or buy out) military service before being able to renounce the nationality.
- the third-country national has done everything possible to renounce the nationality, however has not succeeded. The IND can decide to not withdraw Dutch citizenship in this case.⁶⁵

Please note that this list of examples is not exhaustive.

Q38. Are there any particular requirements that third-country nationals have to fulfil if they want to acquire or hold the citizenship of your Member State while keeping their other one(s)? If so, which requirements?

Yes.

Please explain:

In order for the third-country national to acquire Dutch citizenship while holding the other nationality, he/she has to be eligible for one of the exceptions to the rule of renunciation, of which some are listed in Q37. In case the third-country national believes to be eligible for one of these exceptions, he/she already has to indicate and substantiate this when submitting the application for naturalisation. There are no further requirements.

No.

Q39. Are there any particular restrictions placed on third-country nationals who hold dual citizenship? Does dual citizenship confer fewer rights? (e.g. access to specific types of employment)

Yes.

No.

⁶⁴ Article 9, paragraph 3, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

⁶⁵ Article 15, paragraph 1d, Guidelines for the application of the Netherlands Nationality Act.

Q40. If your Member State allows dual /multiple citizenships, have there been any particular benefits or challenges that this policy has brought?

Yes.

Rule of renunciation

As explained in Q36, in principle the third-country national has to renounce his/her other nationality. However, there are exceptions to this rule of renunciation. This means that in practice a number of third-country nationals keep their other nationality when they acquire Dutch citizenship.

The rule of renunciation can be seen as a deterrent for those who consider applying for naturalisation. Namely, from Dutch research in 2016⁶⁶ it appears that the rule of renunciation reduces the probability of citizenship acquisition (please note: this does not only apply to third-country nationals). From the results it becomes clear that migrants naturalise later and less often when they have to renounce their nationality. In the research it is theorised that the rule of renunciation is one of the things that figures into the decision of migrants to naturalise or not because it affects the cost-benefit calculation. For example, migrants could lose certain rights when renouncing their nationality, such as the right to easily travel back to the country of origin to visit family members. Disadvantages such as these are taken into account by migrants when deciding whether or not to apply for naturalisation.

No.

Section 5: Citizenship and integration

Q41. How does the integration policy of your Member State address the acquisition of citizenship? Is citizenship addressed in your national integration strategy/action plan?

Yes.

Please explain (e.g. is naturalisation considered the end point of an integration process or is the acquisition of citizenship intended to facilitate integration)?

No.

The acquisition of citizenship as such is not specifically addressed in the integration policy of the Netherlands.

Q42. Is there any evidence, e.g., from research or evaluation, indicating that the acquisition of citizenship facilitates integration, in particular on the labour market?

Please elaborate:

In the Netherlands, no evaluation or research has been done, indication that the acquisition of citizenship facilitates integration on the labour market.

Q43. What are the main differences and new rights and duties between being a citizen of your country compared to holding a permanent or long-term residence permit? Please elaborate on the following aspects:

⁶⁶ Floris Peters, Maarten Vink & Hans Schmeets (2016) The ecology of immigrant naturalisation: a life course approach in the context of institutional conditions, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 42:3, 359-381, DOI: [10.1080/1369183X.2015.1103173](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1103173)

Q43a: Participation in regional or national elections.

Please explain:

- National elections and provincial elections: only Dutch citizens are allowed to vote.
- Municipality elections: Dutch citizens and EU citizens can vote. Migrants who have lawfully been residing in the Netherlands for more than 5 years can vote.
- Water board elections: Dutch citizens, EU citizens, migrants with a residence permit can vote.
- Island Council elections (Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba): Dutch citizens and migrants who have been lawfully living in the Kingdom of the Netherlands for 5 years can vote. In order to be able to vote for the Island Council you have to be residing on one of the Dutch Caribbean islands.
- European Parliament elections: Dutch citizens and EU citizens can vote, including citizens living in Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba.⁶⁷

Q43b: Access to certain types of employment (jobs that are only open to citizens of your country)

Please explain:

In accordance with EU law, the Dutch government makes a distinction between employment that requires a certain degree of loyalty to the Netherlands and employment that does not:

Employment in the public service that involve direct or indirect participation in the exercise of powers and therefore requires a loyalty bond with the Netherlands (for example judges, police officers, soldiers, policy officers on federal levels, tax officers). (Art. 45 par. 4 TFEU).

Employment in the public service that do not require a loyalty bond are exempted from being limited solely to citizens (such as teachers, nurses, doctors and policy officers on regional levels) (EU Court case 147/79). In this regard, limitations in employment in these fields can be subject to impediments as long as it serves the public interest and when they are applied in a proportionate and non-discriminatory manner. (EU court case 379/87).⁶⁸

Q43c: Other differences / advantages, such as social and economic rights (social security, benefits, allowances, etc.).

Please explain:

Social security, benefits and allowances are equal for Dutch citizens as citizens holding a permanent or long-term residence permit. However, when an applicant has received his residence permit he/she is granted the possibility get a loan from the government in order to buy furniture and other home supplies. The amount of the loan will be held back from other allowances the individual receives.⁶⁹

Q44. What support is given once citizenship has been granted to support the new citizen in their role as a citizen (e.g. information sessions organised at a local level, other information material)? Are there good practices in place in your Member State?

Please elaborate:

⁶⁷ Government of the Netherlands 'When can I vote at elections?', <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/verkiezingen/vraag-en-antwoord/wanneer-mag-ik-stemmen-bij-verkiezingen>, last accessed on 10 October 2019.

⁶⁸ Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Prohibition of discrimination and the exceptions', <https://ecer.minbuza.nl/ecer/dossiers/werknemers-vrij-verkeer/discriminatieverbod-en-uitzonderingen.html> (in Dutch), last accessed on 10 October 2019.

⁶⁹ Refugee Support Center Netherlands, 'Housing arrangements for refugees', <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/feiten-cijfers/procedures-wetten-beleid/huisvesting> (in Dutch), last accessed on 10 October 2019.

No specific support is given once citizenship has been granted. Much information is already given during the civic integration procedure, with the participation statement trajectory and during the naturalisation ceremony (see Q12 and Q32). However, it is possible to follow language courses at a local level and there are certain initiatives to support finding a job, such as the Further Integration in the Labour Market programme (Dutch: Verdere Integratie op de Arbeidsmarkt, VIA). This programme, launched by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment in 2017, aims at improving the position of Dutch nationals with a migration background in the Dutch labour market. Nevertheless, this is not specifically directed at supporting one in the role of a new citizen and thus there are no good practices in the Netherlands in this area.

Q45. With the acquisition of national citizenship there is also the acquisition of EU citizenship which confers rights such as the freedom to move or reside within the territory of the EU or the right to vote for and stand as a candidate in the European Parliament and municipal elections. What information or other support measures (if any) are given in your country to allow new citizens to enact their role as EU citizens (e.g. signposting to information material on the rights and responsibilities of EU citizens or specific, tailored information)? Is this different / additional to information provided to all citizens on their rights and responsibilities as EU citizens?

Please explain:

No specific information or support measures are given in the Netherlands to allow new citizens to enact their role as EU citizens. This is not different to information provided to all citizens on their rights and responsibilities as EU citizens.

Q46. Are there any indications (e.g. in reports, studies or statistics) that acquisition of citizenship facilitates mobility to other Member States and/or mobility or longer-term migration to non-EU countries?

Yes.

No.

Please explain: A recent study has shown that naturalisation is generally associated with long-term settlement in the Netherlands; 65% of the applicants that have not naturalised will eventually leave the Netherlands compared to less than 25%⁷⁰ of the applicants that have naturalised. For the purpose of this study, researchers have made a comparison between the applicants *urge* to leave the Netherlands before he/she has acquired Dutch citizenship and after he/she has acquired Dutch citizenship. In the period prior to acquiring citizenship, it would not be in the benefit of the applicant to leave the Netherlands since this would result in the breach of the condition to reside in the Netherlands for five years, and are therefore more willing to stay. When citizenship had been acquired the chance of the individual staying in the Netherlands will increase with 10%. However, this study also casts a light on the fact that acquiring the Dutch nationality provides chances and opportunities to move to other EU-countries and, although be it to a lesser extent, back to the country of origin. Having the Dutch nationality proves to be some sort of safeguard for the applicant; in case the applicant migrates back to his country of origin and his expectations do not match the reality, he maintains the opportunity to move back to the Netherlands because he/she has acquired the Dutch nationality.⁷¹

⁷⁰ WODC, tabel 2, p 23.

⁷¹ WODC, 'Blijven vergunninghouders in Nederland?', https://www.wodc.nl/binaries/Cahier%202019-13_Samenvatting_tcm28-410918.pdf, p 8, last accessed on 10 October 2019.

Section 6: Conclusions and lessons learned

Please comment on the findings of your national report by drawing conclusions, identifying any key challenges and lessons learned, as well as outlining any planned policy developments in the upcoming years:

Please explain:

In the Netherlands **the acquisition of citizenship** is based on mixed *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*. This is stated in the Netherlands Nationality Act (chapter two, article three), which is the legal instrument covering the acquisition of citizenship for third-country nationals in The Netherlands. Next to **ordinary naturalisation**, third-country nationals can also acquire Dutch citizenship through the **option** procedure which is a different procedure than the naturalisation procedure. The option procedure is a fast and easy way to acquire Dutch citizenship. However, as specific conditions apply, not every third-country national can apply for the option statement.

In order to qualify for Dutch citizenship through **ordinary naturalisation** you need to be 18 years or older or have been married/ registered partnership before attaining that age. You need to have your residence in the Netherlands and have lived uninterruptedly in the Kingdom of the Netherlands for at least 5 years with a valid residence permit. Several exceptions apply to the 5 year requirement. In the Netherlands, the period of residence is based on legal residence. You need to be registered at the town hall in the municipality where you live in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) on your home address.

A condition for naturalisation is that the third-country national has passed (or has been exempted from) the civic **integration exam or naturalisation test** and has obtained the civic integration diploma.

With regard to **public order and security**, there can be no ongoing criminal proceedings against the third-country national in the Netherlands or abroad when applying for naturalisation. The third-country national cannot pose a threat to public order and security in the Netherlands or pose a threat to the safety of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

With regard to the **naturalisation procedure**, the third-country national has to apply for naturalisation in the municipality in which (s)he lives. The municipality advises the Immigration- and Naturalisation Service (IND) on whether there are any objections. The IND takes this into account when making a decision. When the decision is positive, the third-country national is obliged to attend a **naturalisation ceremony**. During this ceremony the third-country national makes the **declaration of solidarity** -by which the third-country national agrees that the laws of the Kingdom of the Netherlands apply to him/her- and the naturalisation decision is presented. The legally prescribed maximum time period for the entire naturalisation procedure is 12 months. Only rarely are cases prioritised and only in highly exceptional cases (such as for reasons of state interest) is it possible to grant naturalisation when certain requirements for the normal procedure have not been fulfilled.

Regarding the **verification of the identity** of naturalisation applicants it can be challenging for the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) when third-country nationals appeal for **lack of documentary evidence**. This is mostly because the IND has to have information about documentary procedures of all countries in the world. Moreover, it is harder for the IND to check the identity of an applicant when there are no available documents, although in most cases the IND has collected relevant information during the immigration procedure.

Concerning **dual citizenship**, in principle the third-country national has to renounce his/her nationality in order to acquire Dutch citizenship. There are exceptions to this **rule of renunciation**, for example in case the third-country national is married to or in a registered partnership with a Dutch citizen or is holder of an asylum residence permit. In those cases where third-country nationals do not have to renounce their former nationality, and thus have dual

nationality, there are no particular restrictions. However, the rule of renunciation can be seen as a deterrent for those who consider applying for naturalisation. From research it appears that migrants naturalise later and less often when they have to renounce their nationality.

The acquisition of citizenship as such is not specifically addressed in the **integration policy** of the Netherlands. Furthermore, no evaluation or research has been done indicating that the acquisition of citizenship facilitates integration on the labour market.

With regard to the **election process**, only national and provincial elections are limited to Dutch citizens. Elections with a more regional nature such as the municipality and water board elections are open to those who are lawfully residing in the corresponding communities, regardless of their nationality.

In the field of **social security**, the Dutch government does not distinguish between citizens and those individuals holding a permanent residence permit.

When it comes to restricting certain types of **employment** to Dutch citizens, the Dutch government follows the guidelines provided in EU law and solely restricts employment to types of employment that requires a certain degree of loyalty to the Netherlands (e.g. judges, police officers, soldiers and policy officers on a federal level). Employment in the public service that does not require this sense of loyalty, is not restricted to Dutch citizens (such as teachers, nurses and policy officers on a regional level). In general, once citizenship has been granted to the applicant, the Dutch government does not make a distinction between the 'new' citizens and the natural citizens. Therefore, no specific support is given once citizenship has been granted. However, there are possibilities to follow language courses to increase Dutch language skills and there are certain initiatives to promote the integration of Dutch nationals with a migration background to the labour market.

Obtaining citizenship is generally associated with **long-term settlement in the Netherlands**; 65% of applicants that have not naturalised will eventually leave the Netherlands compared to a percentage of less than 25% of applicants that have naturalised. However, Dutch citizenship in some cases also proves to be a safeguard for individuals to move to other countries with the guarantee that they are able to return back to the Netherlands at any time.

Planned policy developments in the upcoming years

In accordance with the Coalition Agreement, the State Secretary for Justice and Security informed the House of Representatives further of the modernisation of nationality law.⁷² The legislative change consists of two components that are being prepared together. This concerns broadening the possibility of possessing more than one nationality for future first generations of emigrants and immigrants. At the same time, there will be a compulsory time of choice for following generations that will actually lead to the retention of no more than one nationality. Having multiple nationalities, the person involved is subject to more than one legal system, which could lead to conflicting legal situations when principles under Dutch law are conflicting with those under a different legal system.⁷³ Rights and obligations may conflict as a result of multiple nationalities. Therefore, the choice has been made to limit the constant and

⁷²Letter to parliament of 11 September 2019 about the modernisation process of nationality law:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/kamerstukken/2018/09/11/tk-proces-modernisering-nationaliteitsrecht/tk-proces-modernisering-nationaliteitsrecht.pdf>.

⁷³Mr C. Riezebos's answer on behalf of the State Secretary for Justice and Security, Mark Harbers, to the open letter of 18 October 2018 to the State Secretary about dual nationality on behalf of the Dutch Nationals Abroad (NIHB) organisation. Dutch Nationals Abroad (NIHB), 28/10/2019: <https://www.nihb.nl/overheid-formaliteiten/dubbele-nationaliteit/het-antwoord-op-de-open-brief-aan-staatssecretaris-harbers/>.

expanding possession of multiple nationalities this way. The scope and contents of this proposal is still under discussion.

Next to this, what also has been mentioned in the 2017 Coalition Agreement is the altering of the minimum level of Dutch which is required to pass the civic integration exam. The required level will be changed from A-2 to B-1. This will be part of the overall changes to the civic integration system which will enter into effect as of 1 January 2021.⁷⁴ The proposed legislation would change the civic integration program required for persons entitled to international protection and their family members and family migrants who fall under the scope of the Civic integration act, as well as for applicants applying for permanent residence or Dutch nationality and dependents of Dutch nationals. Amongst others, under the new rules, foreign nationals would need to complete one of three new integration routes based on their existing language and educational capabilities. Also, municipalities would be in control of the implementation of the new the civic integration system.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Kamerstukken II, 2018-2019, 32824 nr. 283 (in Dutch).

⁷⁵ For more information and the specifications please visit: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-32824-283.html> (in Dutch), last accessed on 5 November 2019.