



Could I lose my Dutch nationality automatically? And how can I avoid this?

Do you have Dutch nationality and do you want to take a second or subsequent nationality? Or do you already have a number of nationalities apart from Dutch only? If this applies to you, you run the risk of automatically losing Dutch nationality. You should therefore read this information carefully.

There is a lot of information about Dutch nationality. This fact sheet only covers the ways in which Dutch nationality can be lost automatically. Are you looking for information about loss as a result of the Dutch government revoking your Dutch nationality? You can read about this on the following website: <https://www.government.nl/topics/dutch-nationality/contents/loss-of-dutch-nationality>.

Or do you want information about regaining Dutch nationality? You can read about this on the following website: <https://www.government.nl/topics/dutch-nationality/contents/becoming-a-dutch-national>.

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1. Situation 1. You are voluntarily taking another nationality. Will you lose Dutch nationality as a result?

In accordance with Dutch law, Dutch nationality is lost automatically when you voluntarily take another nationality. This means that you are no longer a Dutch citizen. This applies when you live abroad but it also applies if you live in the Netherlands.

Example

Anneke has Dutch nationality. She went to live in France when she was 40. She is now 55 and still lives in France and she takes French nationality. Anneke automatically loses her Dutch nationality as a result of voluntarily taking another nationality.

Three exceptions to the rule

There are three exceptions to the aforementioned rule. An individual does not lose Dutch nationality if:

1. The Dutch citizen was born in the country of the new nationality and has their main residence there when they obtain the new nationality. You will find an example of this on the next page.

Example

Dwight has Dutch nationality. Dwight was born in Suriname in 1953. He took up residence in Suriname from the Netherlands in 2007 and in 2016 he applies for and is granted Surinamese nationality. Dwight continues to be a Dutch citizen because he is taking the nationality of the country in which he was born and where he also resides when he obtains the other nationality.

2. Prior to becoming an adult, the Dutch citizen has had their main residence in the country in which they are taking the nationality for an uninterrupted period of five years.

Example

Ronald has Dutch nationality. As an eight-year-old boy, he moved from the Netherlands to Switzerland with his parents. He takes Swiss nationality when he is 23 years old. Ronald continues to be a Dutch citizen because he had more than five-years uninterrupted residence in Switzerland before becoming an adult.

3. The Dutch citizen is a husband, wife or registered partner who voluntarily takes the nationality of the marriage partner. This situation pertains to a Dutch citizen who has a husband, wife or registered partner with that other nationality on the day of taking that nationality.

Example

Rose has Dutch nationality. She is married to Felix who has Brazilian nationality. Rose applies for and is granted Brazilian nationality. Rose remains a Dutch citizen because she is taking the nationality of her husband.

The three exceptions do not apply to Norway or Austria

These three exceptions do not apply when taking Norwegian or Austrian nationality. Dutch nationality is always lost as a result of treaties between the Netherlands and these countries.

Example

1. Tom has Dutch nationality. Tom was born in Norway in 1953. He took up residence in Norway from the Netherlands in 2007 and in 2016 he applies for and is granted Norwegian nationality. Tom automatically loses his Dutch citizenship based on the treaty between the Netherlands and Norway.
2. Mark has Dutch nationality. As an eight-year-old boy, he moved from the Netherlands to Austria with his parents. He takes Austrian nationality when he is 23 years old. Mark automatically loses his Dutch citizenship based on the treaty between the Netherlands and Austria.
3. Lisa has Dutch nationality. She is married to Olaf who has Norwegian nationality. Lisa applies for and is granted Norwegian nationality. Lisa automatically loses her Dutch nationality based on the treaty between the Netherlands and Norway.

2. Situation 2. You have been resident outside of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten or the European Union for at least ten years since becoming an adult. Will you then lose Dutch nationality?

Since 01 April 2003 Dutch law has stipulated that you automatically lose your Dutch nationality if:

- at any time after reaching the age of 18 years you reside outside of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten or the European Union for at least 10 years; and
- you also have another nationality during those ten years.

Example

Since his birth in 1986, Ayhan has had Dutch and Turkish nationality. He was born in the Netherlands. He became 26 years old in 2012 and moved to South Africa. This means that the 10-year loss period started in 2012 in his case. He risks losing his Dutch nationality automatically in 2022.

Exception to the rule

You are not subject to this provision if you are living abroad because:

- you have an employment contract with the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao or Sint Maarten or with an international body in which the Kingdom is represented, or
- you are the husband or registered partner of a person with such an employment contract; or
- you are the unmarried partner in a long-standing relationship and cohabit with a person with such an employment contract.

Example of the exception

Since his birth in 1986, Fatih has had Dutch and Turkish nationality. He was born in the Netherlands. He became 26 years old in 2012 and moved to South Africa with his registered partner who is employed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The loss provision does not apply to Fatih because (and for so long as) his registered partner is employed by the Dutch government.

Important: the loss period is 10 years

The loss period of 10 years ceases in the following circumstances:

1. If you take up residence in the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten or the European Union for longer than one year; or
2. If you apply for and are issued with a valid Dutch passport; or
3. If you apply for and are issued with a valid Dutch identity card; or
4. If you apply for and are issued with a Dutch Nationality Certificate (*Verklaring bezit Nederlanderschap*). This is a certificate based on the Dutch Citizenship Act (*Rijkswet Nederlanderschap, RWN*); the fourth paragraph of Section 15 of the RWN relates to holding Dutch citizenship. Please see the [www.rijksoverheid.nl](https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/nederlandse-nationaliteit/vraag-en-antwoord/wanneer-heb-ik-een-bewijs-van-nederlanderschap-nodig-en-waar-vraag-ik-het-aan) internet site: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/nederlandse-nationaliteit/vraag-en-antwoord/wanneer-heb-ik-een-bewijs-van-nederlanderschap-nodig-en-waar-vraag-ik-het-aan> (Dutch only).

The loss period of 10 years recommences

The period of 10 years recommences on obtaining one of the documents above or on resettlement outside of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten or the European Union.

We recommend that you always ensure that you have a valid Dutch passport, valid identity card or Dutch Nationality Certificate.

Example

Since her birth in 1990, Rachida has had Dutch and Moroccan nationality. She was born in the Netherlands. She became 22 years old in 2012 and moved to Morocco. This means that the 10-year loss period started in 2012 in her case. She continues to live in Morocco. She obtains a new Dutch passport on 20 July 2020. This means that a new period of 10 years starts on 20 July 2020. Rachida (once again) risks losing her Dutch nationality automatically on 20 July 2030.

3. Situation 3. The combination of Situation 1 and Situation 2

Have you been resident outside of the Netherlands, Aruba Curaçao, Sint Maarten or the European Union for an extended period of time? In that case, you may be affected by the loss rules in both Situation 1 and Situation 2.

Example

Gerard was born in the Netherlands in 1981 and has Dutch nationality. In 2006, he married Susan who has New Zealand nationality. The married couple have lived in New Zealand since 2007. Gerard applies for and is granted New Zealand nationality in 2013. Gerard remains a Dutch citizen in 2013 because he is taking his wife's nationality. In Gerard's case, the 10-year period for loss on the grounds of Situation 2 commences at the time he obtains New Zealand nationality. Namely, the grounds for loss that apply to Dutch citizens with dual nationality, who remain outside of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the European Union for an extended period of time. Gerard can halt this loss period himself by ensuring that he has a valid Dutch passport, valid identity card or Dutch Nationality Certificate at all times.

4. More grounds for loss

This factsheet describes the ways in which you can automatically lose Dutch nationality.

The Dutch government can also revoke Dutch nationality. You can find more information about this on the Dutch government's website. Click this link for more information:

<https://www.government.nl/topics/dutch-nationality/contents/loss-of-dutch-nationality>

5. More information

www.rijksoverheid.nl

The Dutch government's website www.rijksoverheid.nl contains information about a large number of topics. If you can't find an answer to your question on this website, you can phone or email your question to the public information department of the Ministry of General Affairs (*Informatie Rijksoverheid*). The telephone number is: 1400 (local rates) and we are open from 08.00 to 20.00 on working days. You can also email your question using the contact form on the website.

You can also find information about becoming a Dutch citizen (again) on the Dutch government's website. Please click the following link for more details: <https://www.government.nl/topics/dutch-nationality/contents/becoming-a-dutch-national>

Immigration and Naturalisation Service (*Immigratie en Naturalisatiedienst, IND*)

You can also find information about Dutch citizenship and Dutch nationality on the IND's website: www.ind.nl.

Legal Aid and Advice Centre (*Juridisch Loket*)

You can obtain legal information or advice from the Legal Aid and Advice Centre.

Would you like to know if there is a Legal Aid and Advice Centre near you? Then call 0900 8020 (€ 0.25 per minute), or visit the website www.juridischloket.nl.



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