



AD HOC QUERY ON 2020.24 Measures taken in the field of acquisition of citizenship as a result of the Covid-19 crisis

Requested by Adolfo SOMMARRIBAS on 8 April 2020

Compilation produced on 30 July 2020

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden plus Norway (24 in Total)

Disclaimer:

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1. Background information

The Commission has allowed Member States to launch COVID-19 related ad-hoc queries with a deadline of 7 days (which is quite short considering the circumstances when most of the staff of the immigration services are working from home). Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, Member States have used the EMN to collect information on several topics. Additionally, other organizations are gathering information as well, mainly asylum (EASO) and borders (Frontex).

EMN considers that it is necessary to obtain an updated overview of measures with regard to acquisition of citizenship. For this purpose the EMN, on the initiative of the Netherlands and Luxembourg will launch two ad-hoc queries to provide quick, short, objective and reliable information on these issues. This second ad-hoc query is aimed at obtaining information on the overarching measures by Member States in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the field of the acquisition of citizenship.

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The EMN would like Member States to answer these questions within a deadline of 7 days and thus provide their replies by Friday 17 April. On Monday 20 April compilations will be produced. Member States are then asked to update this information on a weekly basis. The EMN really appreciates your contribution and comprehension during these difficult times.

2. Questions

1. What measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis are in place in your Member State with regard to lodging and deciding applications for citizenship? Please indicate on which date the measure entered into force and if available please include the links to those measures.

2. What measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis are in place in your Member State with regard to appeal procedures, in particular when these normally require a hearing of the applicant in order to come to a decision? Please indicate on which date the measure entered into force and if available please include the links to those measures.

We would very much appreciate your responses by **3 July 2020**.

3. Responses

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		Wider Dissemination ²	
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¹ If possible at time of making the request, the Requesting EMN NCP should add their response(s) to the query. Otherwise, this should be done at the time of making the compilation.

² A default "Yes" is given for your response to be circulated further (e.g. to other EMN NCPs and their national network members). A "No" should be added here if you do not wish your response to be disseminated beyond other EMN NCPs. In case of "No" and wider dissemination beyond other EMN NCPs, then for the Compilation for Wider Dissemination the response should be removed and the following statement should be added in the relevant response box: "This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further."


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	<p>EMN NCP Austria</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. None.</p> <p>2. If, as a result of the measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, freedom of movement or interpersonal contact is restricted, oral hearings (including appeal proceedings) shall only be held to the extent that is absolutely necessary to maintain an orderly administration of justice. If it is absolutely necessary to hold oral hearings, they may also be held in the absence of other parties, using appropriate technical means of communication (Art. 3 Federal Law regarding the accompanying measures to COVID-19 in administrative proceedings, in proceedings before administrative courts and in proceedings before the Supreme Administrative Court and Constitutional Court). This measures entered into force on 22 March 2020. https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung/Bundesnormen/20011086/Begleitma%c3%9fnahmen%20zu%20COVID-19%20im%20Verwaltungsverfahren%2c%20im%20Verfahren%20der%20Verwaltungsgerichte%20sowie%20im%20Verfahren%20des%20Verwaltungsgerichtshofes%20und%20des%20Verfassungsgerichtshofes%2c%20Fassung%20vom%2008.04.2020.pdf</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Belgium</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. The National Security Council decided that public administrations should continue to carry out their essential missions, which include processing nationality applications, taking care to maintain physical distance and/or by stimulating telework. Administrations must inform the public of the possibilities of obtaining documents and information via alternative means (online). The concrete organisation of the municipal services belongs to the cities and municipalities and to the supervisory authority (opening hours, if work is done (only) by appointment, determining the measures taken to respect physical distance. etc.). Given the necessary capacity of our administrations to guarantee the continuity of their service to citizens, and according to the procedures which have just been specified, it has not been considered useful to adopt specific provisions in matters of application for nationality, in execution of the law of 27 March 2020 empowering the King to take measures to combat the spread of the "COVID19 virus".</p>

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			<p>2. Concerning the measures taken with regard to appeal procedures, one can refer to Article 2 of the Royal Decree No. 2 of April 9, 2020, pertaining to measures relating to civil hearing and written procedure. The royal decree was taken in execution of the aforementioned law of March 27, 2020 (see question 1.) and published in the Belgian Official Gazette on April 9, 2020. The entry into force of the decree corresponds to the date of its publication. In this regard, the Royal Decree of April 28, 2020 prolonged the measures taken relating to oral hearings and the written procedure. According to the aforementioned article 2 of the law of March 27, all the cases whose hearing is fixed between April 11 and June 3 included before the courts and tribunals and in which all the parties have submitted written submissions are, as of right, taken under advisement without oral argument. The party who refuses to take his case under advisement without oral argument informs the judge in writing and in a reasoned manner within the appropriate time limits.</p> <p>If all parties object, the case is postponed. In the event of opposition from one or more parties, the judge rules on documents. He can decide either to hold the hearing, possibly by videoconference, to postpone the case, or to take the matter under advisement without oral argument.</p> <p>At the latest one month after the case has been taken under advisement or, where applicable, at the latest one month from the filing of the documents, the judge may request that the parties provide oral explanations, possibly by means of videoconference, on the points of which the Registry informs the parties in writing.</p> <p>Within the same period or, where applicable, the day when oral explanations are given to him, the Judge closes the proceedings.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Bulgaria</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. The Ministry of Justice discussed and took measures in the field of the citizenship change proceedings (acquisition, restoration, and release from Bulgarian citizenship) because of the situation, connected with the growing Covid-19 pandemic, as well as Decision of 13 March 2020, and Decision of 3 April 2020 of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria on declaring a state of emergency. In reference to this, the Minister of Justice has decided, with Order № ЛС-04-125/16.03.2020, amended by Order № ЛС-04-144/10.04.2020, to introduce the following measures in the field of citizenship change proceedings by the end of the declared state of emergency:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accepting documents and conducting interviews with applicants for acquisition, restoration and

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			<p>release from Bulgarian citizenship has been suspended;</p> <p>2. The issuance of certificates in compliance with the decree of the Vice President of the Republic of Bulgaria for acquisition, restoration and release from Bulgarian citizenship has been suspended;</p> <p>3. The meetings of the Citizenship Council with the Ministry of Justice has been suspended.</p> <p>At the moment, amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Citizenship Council with the Ministry of Justice have been prepared at the Ministry of Justice, concerning the introduction of actions for holding absent Council meetings, which are to be published in the State Gazette.</p> <p>Update on 30.04:2020 - Here is the link to the orders of the minister of justice, regulating the measures adopted by the government: https://www.justice.government.bg/home/index/3b2adb11-6af5-4f89-902c-6e5...</p> <p>Related to the measure for suspension of meetings of the Citizenship Council with the Ministry of Justice, Regulation supplementing the Rules of Procedure of the Citizenship Council was drafted and promulgated in the Official Gazette issue 37/21.04.2020. The rules adopted in the Regulation provide for the possibility of conducting non-attendance meetings of the Council in the case of a declared state of emergency in the country.</p> <p>The changes shall take effect on the day of their promulgation in the Official Gazette. Link to access Official Gazette issue 37: https://dv.parliament.bg/DVWeb/showMaterialDV.jsp?idMat=147416</p> <p>Update on 22.05.2020 - According to order ЛС-04-168/13.05.2020 of the Minister of Justice (pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 4 of the Law on administration and in connection with order № РД-01-183/06.04.2020 of the Health Minister for introducing a temporary ban on entering the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria of all third country nationals and of persons regardless their nationality, arriving from EU Member States and Schengen area where the spreading of COVID-19 is at high risk) the term of suspending the acceptance and registration of documents, as well as the conduction of interviews for acquisition, restoration and release from Bulgarian citizenship at the counters and in the reception premises of the Bulgarian Citizenship Directorate (during the declared state of emergency by the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria) has been extended by two months after the repeal of the state of emergency. The extension of the term does not apply to foreigners with long-term or permanent residence permit on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria and to Bulgarian citizens. The acceptance and registration of documents of these foreigners, as well as the conduction of interview are made in the reception premises of the Bulgarian Citizenship Directorate under the regime of accessing and servicing one citizen in the reception premises, as of 14 May 2020.</p> <p>Currently, certificates for changing the citizenship (pursuant to Article 37 of the Law on the Bulgarian</p>
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			<p>Citizenship) are issued to citizens, who have made an electronic reservation for the date and time of obtaining a certificate, at the counters of the Bulgarian Citizenship Directorate. According to Article 15 of the Regulation for supplementing the Regulation of the activity of the Citizenship Council with the Ministry of Justice (promulgated in the State Gazette, edition 37 from 21 April 2020) absentee meetings of the Council are held.</p> <p>This is the link where you can see the orders of the Minister of Justice, which regulate the measures, taken by the Ministry of Justice: https://mjs.bg/home/index/3b2adb11-6af5-4f89-902c-6e53c07a80db</p> <p>2. In Bulgaria, the ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSAL CODE regulates the issuance, contestation and enforcement of administrative acts, as well as the judicial challenge of by-laws. The Code shall apply to administrative proceedings before all authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria, unless otherwise provided by law.</p> <p>The certificates for obtaining Bulgarian citizenship are issued in compliance with a decree of the Vice President of the Republic of Bulgaria, and according to Art. 2, para. (2) Item 1 of the APC, The provisions of the Code shall not apply to the acts of the National Assembly and the President of the Republic. That is, they are not subject to appeal.</p> <p>According to the Law on Bulgarian citizenship, the Minister of Justice, on the basis of the opinion of the Citizenship Council, makes a proposal to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for issuing a decree or refusal to issue a decree for acquisition, restoration, release or deprivation of Bulgarian citizenship. If the Minister of Justice fails to pronounce within the time limits specified in the law, this could be subject to appeal before the Administrative Court – Sofia Region in accordance with the procedure of the Administrative Procedure Code. The court only checks the progress of the proceedings and gives a ruling which is final.</p> <p>In connection with the epidemic situation and the declared state of emergency in Bulgaria regarding COVID-19, applications, complaints and other documents shall be submitted electronically in the Administrative Court – Sofia Region. Currently, all types of administrative cases in the Administrative Court – Sofia Region have been suspended in accordance with Order № 212/16 March 2020.</p> <p>Enclosure:</p> <p>1. Link with announcement of the Administrative Court – Sofia Region that all applications, complains and other documents shall be send electronically. file:///C:/Users/User/Desktop/EMN/EMAILS/%D0%B0%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BB/15.04.2020/s-covid19.pdf</p>
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			<p>2. Link with Order № 212/16 March 2020 that all administrative cases are suspended in the Administrative Court – Sofia Region. file:///C:/Users/User/Desktop/EMN/EMAILS/%D0%B0%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BB/15.04.2020/covid19-4.pdf Update on 22.05.2020 - According to order № 257 of the Administrative Court – Sofia Region the service of summonses, messages, and court papers in court cases should be done by phone or electronically as of 18 May 2020 until the risk of infection with COVID-19 is eliminated. According to order № 258 of the Administrative Court – Sofia Region all kind of documents can be submitted to the Administrative Court – Sofia Region by post, courier, fax or email. Only employees of companies providing postal or courier services may have access to the Registry Service. If persons do not have the opportunity to submit documents under the above procedure, there is a daily access to the Registry Service within 10 am – 11 am and 3 pm – 4 pm. There are not allowed more than two persons to stay in the Registry Service at the same time, except the court employees working there. People wait for their turn outside the court building. Access to courtrooms is provided only to the participants in the cases scheduled for consideration on the respective day. The entrance to the building of the Administrative Court – Sofia Region is carried out after disinfection and in case that persons wear protective mask and gloves. Administrative court – Sofia Region provides protective mask and gloves to those who do not have mask and gloves. These are the links where you can find the orders № 257 and № 258 of the Administrative Court – Sofia Region, connected with COVID-19: file:///C:/Users/User/Desktop/EMN/Updated%202020.23,%202020.24/covid19-257.pdf file:///C:/Users/User/Desktop/EMN/Updated%202020.23,%202020.24/covid19-258.pdf</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Croatia</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. As from 23 March 2020, officials from the Service for citizenship are working in two teams, A and B (every team works for two weeks). Already submitted application for citizenships are being processed and decisions are brought. Currently, there are no conditions for in person contact with applicant, so the</p>


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			<p>hearings are postponed. New applications for acquisition of citizenship are also postponed. Third country nationals can contact the Service via e-mail and the responses are given via e-mail or telephone. Communication and correspondence with other state bodies and Administrative courts is ongoing.</p> <p>2. During COVID-19 epidemic, there are no hearings taking place in Administrative courts in mentioned matters.</p>
	EMN NCP Cyprus	Yes	<p>1. The Civil Registry and Migration Department (the competent authority for receiving and examining applications for citizenship), in line with the Decision of the Council of Ministers, dated 15.03.2020, has suspended its services except in cases of extreme urgency, as of 17.03.2020. This means that no applications for citizenship can be submitted, as they are not considered, in principle, to be of an urgent nature. Moreover, although the examination of the pending applications continues, no interviews, as part of the examination procedure, are conducted. Finally, no decisions are made on the pending applications, except in cases of emergency.</p> <p>2. The Administrative Court (the competent court for appeals against negative decions on application for citizenship) has suspended its services except in cases of extreme urgency, as of 16.03.2020. There will be no trials on appeals against negative decions on application for citizenship, as they are not considered of an urgent nature. However, the submission of an appeal is considered urgent (and will continue to be possible), as the Constitution foresees a 75 days deadline.</p>
	EMN NCP	Yes	<p>1.</p>



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	Estonia		<p>No measures have been adopted in response to the Covid-19 crisis with regard to lodging and deciding applications for citizenship. It is possible to lodge applications via post or electronically and these measures were strongly in use already before the crisis. The decision maker receives the information electronically and the applicant will be informed about the decision also electronically, hence there is no need to adopt new measures.</p> <p>2. No measures have been adopted in response to the COVID-19 crisis with regard to appeal procedures.</p>
	EMN NCP France	Yes	<p>1. Due to the Covid 19 crisis, there is no possibility to file any application for citizenship since 16 March, all appointments are cancelled and there is no possibility to obtain a new appointment for the moment. All these decisions were enforced through the emergency law to tackle the Covid 19 outbreak dated 23 March 2020 and its related decrees. Link to the government site(https://www.gouvernement.fr/) Link to the emergency law of 23 March 2020 (https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000041746...)</p> <p>2. Due to the crisis no hearing is possible since all related services are closed. In certain cases, a hearing can be organized if there is no possibility to postpone it or organize it differently. However hearing for citizenship applications can probably be postponed since there is no urgency to take the decision in such cases. See Q1 for the reference of the emergency law.</p>




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	<p>EMN NCP Germany</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. The federal states apply the nationality law on their own responsibility. The local nationality authorities decide to what extent they can continue naturalization procedures. Examinations of pending applications are continuing as usual, although there are delays due to restrictions on appointments for visitors. There will be no language exams or naturalization tests until 30 April (at the earliest). The handover of naturalization certificates is being postponed, as are naturalization ceremonies.</p> <p>2. No special measures have been taken. The competent authorities and administrative courts administer appeal procedures taking account of the current situation within the boundaries of the applicable law.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Greece</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. There are no specific measures for citizenship issues. Nationality procedures that do not require physical presence of the applicant and therefore can still be carried out through remote communication via telephone, email, fax, etc, continue to be handled accordingly (eg submission of additional documents on behalf of the applicant, answering questions and providing information/clarifications/guidelines on behalf of the Citizenship Unit, the issuing of naturalization decisions on concluded cases, etc). Source: Citizenship Directorate, Ministry of Interior</p> <p>2. The deadline to appeal has been extended by a 2-month period for the citizen, for appeals that are due after 11th of March (Article 38 paragraph 5 of emergency Law of 20/3/2020, published in the Government Gazette nr 68/Issue A' /20.3.2020)[1]. Please note additionally that in citizenship issues a. the relative appeal can be filed via post and b. the examination of the applicant's appeal by the Administration does not require the applicant's hearing (ie his/her physical presence). Source: Citizenship Directorate, Ministry of Interior [1] Relative law is available in the Greek language at: https://www.taxheaven.gr/law/%CE%A0%CE%9D%CE%A020.03.2020/2020</p>


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	EMN NCP Hungary	Yes	<p>1. The naturalisation procedures are not suspended. Lodging of an application is also possible, however, since 18 March 2020, applicants can only lodge an application if they have a booked appointment.</p> <p>2. Not applicable, as in Hungary the decision on citizenship application cannot be appealed</p>
	EMN NCP Ireland	Yes	<p>1. Applicants are instructed to consult the FAQ document and information notices on the Immigration Service Delivery website www.inis.gov.ie and general information on the citizenship application process, before submitting any urgent queries to a dedicated email address. In addition, original documentation is not to be submitted in person or through the post. The citizenship division will work to return documentation already submitted.</p> <p>2. There is no administrative appeal of a naturalisation decision. All administrative decisions are subject to judicial review by the superior courts (High Court, Court of Appeal, Supreme Court).</p>
	EMN NCP Italy	Yes	<p>1. With regards to citizenship, the provision of Article 103 paragraph 1 of the Decree-Law n. 18 of 17 March 2020 applies to citizenship applications by marriage and residence: The time limits for administrative procedures, was suspended from 23 February to 15 April 2020. Then with Decree-Law n. 23 of 8 April 2020, the suspension of the deadlines was extended to 15 May.</p> <p>As a consequence, also the time limits for procedural and preparatory steps within the application procedure, such as summons of applicants to the Prefecture, are suspended from 23 February 2020 to 15 May 2020.</p>


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			<p>This suspension has already been activated for residence and marriage citizenship application procedures from abroad.</p> <p>In addition, the suspension includes citizenship application procedures which fall outside the competence of the Department of Civil liberties and immigration of the Ministry of the Interior, and belong, instead, to the Civil Status Offices, in Italy and abroad. This relates to the provisions of Article 4, paragraph 2 of Law 91 of 5 February 1992, regarding the acquirement of citizenship by foreigners born in Italy at the age of eighteen, as well as the provision of Article 10, with respect to the declaration of oath.</p> <p>Finally, the provision of Article 103, paragraph 2 of the Decree-Law of 17 March 2020, applies to all certifications, including the ones of the countries of origin, expiring between January 31 and April 15, 2020, produced by citizenship applicants in the context of the citizenship proceedings. These certifications will remain valid until 15 June 2020.</p> <p>As provided for in the Decree-Law n. 18 of 17 March 2020, the slowdown of activities related to citizenship proceedings, as with all administrative procedures, while maintaining the continuity assured through the instruments provided by the current provisions in force, will require, at the end of the emergency, the adoption of specific measures aimed at the conclusion of the most urgent proceedings, based on the deadline or the justified needs of the persons concerned.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>Decree-Law n. 11 of 8 March 2020 and Decree-Law n. 18 of 17 March 2020 both suspended most of Italy's judicial activities.</p> <p>Hearings and suspension of time limits was postponed to 11 May 2020 by article 36 of Decree-Law n. 23 of 8 April 2020.</p>
	EMN NCP	Yes	1.


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	Latvia		<p>During the coronavirus-related state of emergency the reception of visitors in person has been suspended; therefore, the application for Latvian citizenship cannot be submitted in person but it can be sent by post or electronically signed with a secure electronic signature in conformity with the laws and regulations on the drawing up of electronic documents.</p> <p>At the same time, it should be noted that the examinations to be taken by a person who wishes to acquire Latvian citizenship through naturalization procedures are not currently taking place and have been postponed temporarily after the lifting of the state of emergency.</p> <p>Documents are processed as usual.</p> <p>Updated information on citizenship issues is available in the official language on the website of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs: (available only in Latvian) https://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/sakums/jaunumi/covid-19/</p> <p>2. There is no changes in contestation or appeal of an administrative act. An application regarding contestation or appeal of an administrative act may be submitted in writing, by post or electronically, signed with a secure electronic signature in conformity with the laws and regulations on the drawing up of electronic documents.</p>
	EMN NCP Lithuania	Yes	<p>1. Requests related to the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania and live consultations at premises of the Migration Department are suspended Applications since March 14, but decisions on on-going cases continue to be made.</p> <p>According to the Resolution no 207 Declaring Quarantine on the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania art. 3.2.1 "State and municipal institutions and bodies and state and municipal enterprises shall organise their work and provide customer services remotely, except where the functions (tasks) concerned must be performed at the workplace. The performance of urgent and immediate functions (tasks) shall be ensured." Considering that the submission of applications for citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania is not considered urgent and immediate function (task), as without the submission of this application, the legal status of persons in Lithuania does not change substantially.</p> <p>Full Resolution no 207 Declaring Quarantine on the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania, as of</p>


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			<p>May 11, 2020: https://koronastop.lrv.lt/uploads/documents/files/Nutarimas%20Nr_%20207%...</p> <p>2. (Updated on May 11, 2020) The Vilnius Regional Administrative Court (appeal institution) is planning to renew Court hearings from May 11th, 2020. Proceedings will be resumed gradually, giving priority to hearings in cases where further postponement of proceedings may have negative consequences and in cases pending at the final stages of the proceedings. Persons entering the courthouse will be required to wear protective masks, gloves, use disinfectants when entering, temperature will be checked. Link to announcement (in Lithuanian): https://vaat.teismas.lt/naujienos/aktualijos/teismas-atnaujina-savo-darb...</p> <p>The Council of Judges following the ease of quarantine conditions, recommends that Lithuanian courts gradually resume oral proceedings and continue to actively use the opportunities provided by legal acts to ensure the participation of participants in court hearings remotely (centralized court video conferencing equipment, video conferencing programs, etc). Link to The Council of Judges announcement (in Lithuanian): https://vaat.teismas.lt/naujienos/aktualijos/lietuvos-teismu-veikla-sugr...</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Luxembourg</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. The application of nationality is filed before the Registrar office of the municipality in which the applicant resides (articles 19, 34 and 41 of the amended law of 8 March 2017 on Luxembourgish nationality). However, Municipalities are working with reduced staff assuring the essential services and their offices are closed or only working by appointment. It is only when the Registrar considers that the application is completed that it will be transferred to the Ministry of Justice (article 20 (3), 35 (6) and 42 (5)).</p> <p>At the moment, the possibility of lodging an application is very difficult before the Municipality and there is no decision taken by the Minister of Justice concerning nationality during the State of Crisis declared by the Luxembourgish government by the Grand Ducal regulation of 18 March 2020 on the introduction of a series of measures in the framework of the fight against Covid-19 (http://legilux.lu/eli/etat/leg/rgd/2020/03/18/a165/jo).</p>


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			<p>Also the service desk of the Ministry of Justice is closed since 17 March 2020.</p> <p>2. Article 1 of the amended grand-ducal regulation of 25 March 2020 on the suspension of deadlines in jurisdictional matters and temporary adaptation of certain other procedural conditions (http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-rgd-2020-04-01-a227-jo-f...) states that the deadlines prescribed in the proceedings before the constitutional, judicial, administrative and military courts are suspended. During the period of the State of Crisis, no decision will be taken in affairs dealing with Luxembourg nationality issues. This measure entered into force on 26 March 2020.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Malta</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. There has not been any interruption of the services provided in relation to the lodging of such applications at the Offices, which include Maltese Diplomatic Missions, entrusted with the authority to accept such applications, except in the case where the Maltese Diplomatic Mission has been temporarily closed. The process leading to the decision-making on such applications has not been interrupted.</p> <p>2. In accordance with the Maltese Citizenship legislation the decision of the Minister regarding the grant of Maltese citizenship cannot be reviewed by the Courts. Nevertheless there is always the possibility to invoke the residual powers of the Court to review a decision of an adjudicating authority. Currently the Courts are closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic by means of an order issued by the Superintendent of Health. In urgent cases and also cases involving the public interest a request may, however, be made for the opening of the Courts.</p>


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	<p>EMN NCP Netherlands</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. EMN The Netherlands has provided this information on [17-04-2020 / source: Immigration- and Naturalisation Service] In the Netherlands no national measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis with regard to lodging and deciding applications for citizenship are in place. However, with regard to civic integration exams the following measures are established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are no civic integration exams until (at least) April 28th. No costs are involved for third-country nationals participating in the exams when new dates will become available. - It is currently not possible to collect diplomas for participants who have already passed integration exams. A free extract will be available online as proof until diplomas can be collected again. - Applicants for integration exams will have two months extra in order to pass the civic integration exam (normally third-country nationals have to pass the civic integration exam within three years). <p>Although there are no further national measures in place, some municipalities have introduced measures locally. It should be stressed that it differs per municipality whether measures with regard to COVID-19 are in place. A few examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because of the limitation of services in a number of municipalities, in practice it can be difficult to lodge applications for citizenship. In some municipalities lodging applications for citizenship is currently not possible and is therefore postponed until the situation with regard to COVID-19 has improved. In other municipalities it is still possible to lodge applications, although service may be at a lower level (so that it may take more time to lodge an application). - In a number of municipalities it is currently not possible to participate in a naturalisation ceremony. Some municipalities have started for the time being possibilities for a naturalisation ceremony by post. For other municipalities this might mean that, since this ceremony is obligatory in order to become a Dutch citizen, finalising the procedure of requiring Dutch citizenship is delayed for a number of people. <p>2. EMN The Netherlands has provided this information on [17-04-2020 / source: Immigration- and Naturalisation Service]</p> <p>The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (which also handles applications for naturalisation) has postponed hearings until for now the 28th of April. This measure has been introduced in the beginning of March. The IND is looking for alternatives for these hearings, for example hearing by telephone or by post (written hearings).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The courts have stopped most of the appeal procedures, in cases where hearings are necessary.
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			<p>These procedures are postponed.</p> <p>- It is possible that these measures also impact naturalisation procedures, although hearings in the naturalisation procedure are relatively rare.</p>
	EMN NCP Poland	Yes	<p>1. Due to the current COVID-19 threat situation the regulations regarding the acquisition of Polish citizenship have not been changed and such applications are being processed. The persons concerned submit such applications for citizenship to the competent authorities and the authorities issue decisions on acquiring Polish citizenship. However, the direct customer services in offices can be limited to the security reasons by the individual decision of a Governor of the voivodship. In these cases lodging applications may be executed via post.</p> <p>2. At this point it should be noted that currently, pursuant to the provision of art. 15zsz paragraph 1 of the Act of March 2, 2020 on special solutions related to the prevention, contraction and eradication of COVID-19, other infectious diseases and crisis situations caused by them (Journal of Laws, item 374, as amended) during the period of epidemic emergency or the epidemic announced due to COVID-19, the running of procedural and court periods in all administrative, judicial, criminal and other proceedings carried out pursuant to the relevant provisions, and therefore also in proceedings for the acquisition of Polish citizenship, does not begin and the procedure is suspended for this period. It directly means that currently, due to the announced state of the epidemic, the time of considering the application for the acquisition of Polish citizenship can be extended, and at the same time - in accordance with the provision of art. 15zsz paragraph 11 quotation of the Act -</p>



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			<p>the applicant is not entitled to lodge complaints and reminders regarding inactivity, excessive length or violation of the party's right to have the application examined without undue delay. The abovementioned provisions were introduced by the Act of 31 March 2020 amending the Act on special solutions related to the prevention, contraction and eradication of COVID-19, other infectious diseases and the resulting crisis and some other acts (Journal of Laws item 568) and entered into force on the day of its announcement, i.e. March 31, 2020.</p>
	EMN NCP Portugal	Yes	<p>1. No measures were taken, since applications can be lodged, followed and finished online in the Ministry of Justice services' platform, https://justica.gov.pt/Servicos/Estado-do-processo-de-nacionalidade (information only available in Portuguese language).</p> <p>2. No measures were taken, since applications can be lodged, followed and finished online in the Ministry of Justice services' platform, https://justica.gov.pt/Servicos/Estado-do-processo-de-nacionalidade (information only available in Portuguese language).</p>
	EMN NCP Slovakia	Yes	<p>1. No measures have been implemented in this regard.</p> <p>2. No measures have been implemented in this regard as the appeal procedures are conducted only in written form.</p>
	EMN NCP	Yes	<p>1. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the</p>


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	Slovenia		<p>Provisional Measures Act on Judicial, Administrative and Other Public Law Matters for the Control of the Spread of Infectious Disease SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). In accordance with the law, the running of time limits and personal service are suspended in administrative procedures. Regarding the law, applications for citizenship may be submitted by post and decisions can not be served temporarily except in urgent cases.</p> <p>Link to the law: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO8183</p> <p>2. In accordance with the above law in administrative matters, oral hearings and other procedural acts where the official, party or other participant may be in direct contact shall not be carried out except in urgent cases.</p> <p>The law came into force on March 29, 2020.</p>
	EMN NCP Spain	Yes	<p>1. Lodging a citizenship application has not been affected by the COVID-19 crisis as applications are lodged on-line. Other means of applying for the citizenship, i.e. vía mail or official registers, may be affected by confinement measures. As for deciding, all procedures were paralyzed by Royal Decree 463/2020 of 14 march (https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2020/03/14/463; however, the Decree permitted continuation of certain procedures through resolution of the responsible authority, which occurred for nationality procedures.</p> <p>2. Appeal procedures are suspended by Royal Decree 463/2020, of 14 de marzo.</p>
	EMN NCP Sweden	Yes	<p>1. No measures.</p> <p>In Sweden an application for citizenship is done electronically or by mail so this has not been affected by the COVID-19. The work go on as normal.</p>

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			<p>All information regarding migration to Sweden and the Corona virus can be find at a dedicated webpage of the Swedish Migration Agency which will be continuously updated: https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Coron...</p> <p>2. No measures. Normally the applicant is not heard in person in an appeal for citizenship.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Norway</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. April 20, 2020 The Police stations across the country will be slowly reopening their services to the public, but only certain services will be in operation and it will vary from station to station. This applies to reports of serious crime, issuance of passports and treatment of immigrant and residence cases. It is not possible to attend a police station without an appointment. All service centres for foreign workers (SUA) remain closed until further notice. https://www.politiet.no/en/services/residence-permits-and-protection/</p> <p>[March 12, 2020]: In Norway, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is responsible for processing immigration and residency services. But it's the Police who administer the in-person appointments required for many services. All appointments with the police as well as to the service centres for foreign workers were automatically cancelled for more than a month after the lockdown was decided. Residence permits and protection – Police stations and service centres closed. The police immigration offices across the country were closed due to the corona virus situation. If an applicant had booked an appointment with the police before 14 April regarding an application for residency, citizenship or EEA registration, his/her appointment would regrettably have been cancelled. At the time of closing it was not known when the service could re-open, or when it would be possible to make a new appointment. The public was advised to follow-up on the internet. https://www.politiet.no/en/services/residence-permits-and-protection/</p> <p>[March 12, 2020]: Processing of new applications for foreign nationals seeking Norwegian citizenship were put on hold at</p>

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			<p>UDI for anyone who had not previously delivered the required documents to the police authorities. The UDI continued to process applications (for which there is a backlog) where the documentation was completed. No other measures were taken regarding processing of new applications for citizenship. Please note that in January 2020 a fully electronic system was put in place to handle most citizenship applications, however, applicants are required to meet at a police station for the police to check and collect the documentation and that has not been possible after the Corona outbreak. Also it is necessary to conduct language and citizenship tests prior to granting citizenship and that has also been put on hold.</p> <p>2. April 30, 2020 So far there are no other plans in place for appeals. [March 17, 2020]: Prioritising cases In weeks following the Corona virus lockdown, the Norwegian Appeals Board will prioritise cases that can be decided by a board chair after case preparation by the secretariat. It has been decided that all board meetings and other hearings will be delayed. The postponement of board meetings does not mean that cases that would normally have been processed in a board hearing will be treated differently than before. Board meetings will be put on hold until further notice. The same applies to other hearings. https://www.une.no/en/see-more-news/archive/2020/corona-measures/</p>
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