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LAW ON CROATIAN CITIZENSHIP

Chapter I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Croatian citizenship, requirements for its acquisition and its termination, are stipulated by this Act.

Article 2

A citizen of the Republic of Croatia who also has foreign citizenship is considered exclusively as a Croatian citizen by the Governmental bodies of the Republic of Croatia.

Chapter II – ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP

Article 3

Croatian citizenship is acquired:

1. by origin;
2. by birth within the area of the Republic of Croatia;
3. by naturalization;
4. pursuant to international treaties.

Article 4

A child acquires Croatian citizenship by origin:

1. if both of his parents are Croatian citizens at the time of the child's birth;
2. if one of his parents is a Croatian citizen at the time of the child's birth and the child is born in the Republic of Croatia;
3. if one of the parents is a Croatian citizen at the time of the child's birth, the other parent without citizenship or of unknown citizenship, and the child is born abroad.

A child of foreign citizenship or without citizenship acquires Croatian citizenship by origin if he has been adopted by Croatian parents, pursuant to provisions of a special law. Such a child is considered to be a Croatian citizen from the moment of his birth.

Article 5

A child born abroad, one of whose parents is a Croatian citizen at the moment of the child's birth, acquires Croatian citizenship by origin if the child is registered for Croatian citizenship by 18 years of age at a competent authority of the Republic of Croatia abroad or in the Republic of Croatia, or if he settles in the Republic of Croatia.

A child born abroad, one of whose parents is a Croatian citizen at the moment of the child's birth, and who does not fulfil any of the requirements from Paragraph 1 of this Article, acquires Croatian citizenship if he would otherwise remain without citizenship.

A child who acquires Croatian citizenship pursuant to Paragraph 1 or 2 of this Article is considered to be a Croatian citizen from the moment of his birth.

Article 6

(This article has been deleted by the Act of May 8, 1992)

Article 7

A child born or found within the area of the Republic of Croatia, whose both parents are unknown or of unknown citizenship, acquires Croatian citizenship. The child's Croatian citizenship will cease if by his fourteenth birthday, it is confirmed that both of his parents are foreign citizens.

Article 8

A foreigner can acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalization if he has submitted a request for Croatian citizenship and fulfils the following requirements:

1. that he is 18 years old and that he is not deprived of working capacity;

2. that he is dismissed from his foreign citizenship, or that he submits proof that he will acquire dismissal if granted Croatian citizenship;
3. that he has lived and has had a registered residence in the Republic of Croatia until the submission of the request for at least 8 years in continuation and has been granted foreigner status on his permanent residence;
4. that he is proficient in the Croatian language and Latin script, and is familiar with the Croatian culture and social arrangement;
5. that it can be concluded from his behaviour that he respects the legal order and customs of the Republic of Croatia.

The requirement from Point 2 of Paragraph 1 of this Article will be considered as fulfilled if the request has been submitted by a person without citizenship or a person who will lose his citizenship simply by naturalization, pursuant to laws of the country of his citizenship.

If a foreign country does not permit dismissal from its citizenship or it places requirements for dismissal which cannot be fulfilled, a statement of the applicant who has submitted a request will be sufficient to renounce his foreign citizenship under the conditions of acquisition of Croatian citizenship.

The fulfilment of the requirement from Point 4 of Paragraph 1 of this Article is determined by a verification of proficiency in the Croatian language and the Latin script, the culture and social arrangement.

Persons over 60 years of age are not obligated to fulfil the requirements from Point 4 of Paragraph 1 of this Article.

Article 8a

A foreigner who has submitted a request for Croatian citizenship and who has not yet been granted dismissal from foreign citizenship at the moment of the submission of the request or does not have proof that he would gain the dismissal in case of acquiring Croatian citizenship may be issued a guarantee of acceptance to Croatian citizenship if he fulfils the rest of the requirements referred to in Article 8, Paragraph 1, of this Act.

The guarantee shall be issued for a term of two years.

Article 9

A person who was born within the area of and lives in the Republic of Croatia, and has been granted permanent residence, can acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalization, even if he does not fulfil the requirements of Article 8, Paragraph 1, Points 1, 3, and 4 of this Act.

Article 10

A foreign citizen married to a Croatian citizen, who has been granted permanent residence within the area of and lives in the Republic of Croatia, can acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalization, even if he does not fulfil the requirements of Article 8, Paragraph 1, Points 1-4 of this Act.

Article 11

An emigrant, his descendants up to the third degree of lineal kinship and their spouses can acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalization even if they do not meet the requirements from Article 8, Paragraph 1, Points 1, 2 and 3 of this Law.

An emigrant from Paragraph 1 of this Article is a person who has emigrated from the area of the Republic of Croatia with the intention of living permanently abroad.

A person who has emigrated from the area of the Republic of Croatia on the basis of an international treaty or has renounced the Croatian citizenship, and a person who has changed his place of residence into that of one of the other countries that were formerly a part of the state union of which the Republic of Croatia was also a part, is not considered to be an emigrant.

Article 12

A foreigner whose acceptance to Croatian citizenship would be of interest to the Republic of Croatia can obtain Croatian citizenship by naturalization, even if he does not fulfil the requirements of Article 8, Paragraph 1, Points 1-4 of this Act.

A spouse of the person referred to in Paragraph 1 of this Article can also acquire Croatian citizenship, even if he does not fulfil the requirements of Article 8, Paragraph 1, Points 1-4 of this Act.

A competent Ministry gives opinion on whether an interest for the acceptance of the foreigner referred to in the Paragraph 1 of this Article to Croatian citizenship exists.

Article 13

A minor acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalization:

1. if both of his parents acquire Croatian citizenship by naturalization, or
2. if only one of his parents acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalization, and the child lives in the Republic of

Croatia and has been granted residence, or

3. if only one of his parents acquires Croatian citizenship by naturalization, while the other one does not have citizenship or is of unknown citizenship, and the child lives abroad.

Article 14

(This article has been deleted.)

Article 15

A Croatian citizen who has requested and received dismissal from Croatian citizenship in order to acquire foreign citizenship, which was imposed on him as a requirement in order to be able to exercise a profession or activity by the foreign state wherein he has a domicile, may again acquire Croatian citizenship, even if he does not fulfil the requirements of Article 8, Paragraph 1, Points 1-4 of this Act, and if he lives in the Republic of Croatia and has been granted residence.

Article 16

A person who belongs to the Croatian people with no domicile in the Republic of Croatia can acquire Croatian citizenship if he fulfils the requirements of Article 8, Paragraph 1, Point 5 of this Act.

The belonging to the Croatian people is determined by previous declarations and belonging to legal transactions, by statements and affiliation in certain public documents, through the protection of rights and promoting the interests of the Croatian people and active participation in the Croatian cultural, scientific and sports associations abroad.

Chapter III - TERMINATION OF CITIZENSHIP

Article 17

Croatian citizenship will cease:

1. by dismissal;
2. by renouncement;
3. pursuant to international treaties.

Article 18

Dismissal from Croatian citizenship can be granted to a person who has submitted a request for dismissal and fulfils the following requirements:

1. he is at least 18 years old;
2. there are no impediments for dismissal from the citizenship by reason of military conscription
3. he has paid taxes due, fees, and other public charges, and has fulfilled obligations towards legal entities and natural persons in the Republic of Croatia that have been imposed by an executive body;
4. he has fulfilled any such financial obligations that he might have towards his spouse, parents and children who are Croatian citizens, and towards persons who remain to live in the Republic of Croatia
5. he is a foreign citizen, or that he has proved that he will acquire foreign citizenship;

The dismissal from Croatian citizenship cannot be obtained by a person who, at the time when dismissal is requested, is ex-officio charged and prosecuted for a criminal offense, or punished by imprisonment in the Republic of Croatia, until he has served that sentence in full.

Article 19

The decision on dismissal from Croatian citizenship will be repudiated upon the request of the person who has acquired the dismissal if he does not acquire foreign citizenship within three years, and has informed a diplomatic mission or consular office of the Republic of Croatia abroad or a body directly competent to enact a decision on the dismissal within three years about this.

Article 20

Croatian citizenship of a child up to 18 years of age will cease by dismissal:

1. upon the request of both of his parents whose Croatian citizenship has ceased by dismissal; or
2. if Croatian citizenship has ceased by dismissal in the case of one of his parents, and the other parent is a foreign citizen.

A child up to 18 years of age, adopted by foreign citizens with congenial effect, will be dismissed from Croatian citizenship upon the adopters' request.

Article 21

A Croatian citizen of age with a domicile abroad and of foreign citizenship may renounce his Croatian citizenship.

Article 22

Croatian citizenship of a child up to 18 years of age will cease by renouncement:

1. upon the request of his parents whose Croatian citizenship has ceased by renouncement; or
2. if Croatian citizenship has ceased by renouncement for one of his parents, and the other parent is a foreign citizen.

Croatian citizenship of a child up to 18 years of age will cease by renouncement if he has been adopted by foreign citizens with congenial effect, upon the adopters' request.

Article 23

A person whose Croatian citizenship ceased pursuant to Article 20 or 22 of this Act when he was a minor acquires Croatian citizenship again if he has resided within the area of the Republic of Croatia for at least a year in continuation and if he provides a written statement saying that he considers himself a Croatian citizen.

Chapter IV - PROCEDURAL PROVISIONS

Article 24

Persons that have acquired Croatian citizenship by origin or birth within the area of the Republic of Croatia are entered into the records on citizenship while being entered into the register of births. A request to be entered into the records can be submitted abroad, at a diplomatic mission or consular office of the Republic of Croatia, as well.

Affairs related to the acquisition of the Croatian citizenship by origin and birth within the area of the Republic of Croatia are handled by the competent public administration offices, or the municipal authority of the City of Zagreb.

A request for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalization or termination of Croatian citizenship is submitted personally to the police authority, i.e. at a police department, unless the person in question has a disability. In that case, the request can be submitted by a legal representative or an authorized person.

A request for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalization or termination of Croatian citizenship can be submitted abroad, at a diplomatic mission or consular office of the Republic of Croatia, as well.

Article 24a

Croatian citizenship is acquired by naturalization on the day of notice of the decision on the acceptance to Croatian citizenship.

Croatian citizenship is acquired, if granted on the basis of a given statement, on the day of the submission of the statement.

Croatian citizenship will cease by dismissal on the day of notice of the decision on dismissal from Croatian citizenship.

Croatian citizenship will cease by renouncement on the day of the submission of the statement on the renouncement of Croatian citizenship.

Article 25

The Ministry of Internal Affairs handles the affairs related to the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalization and international treaties, and affairs related to the termination of Croatian citizenship.

Article 26

The Ministry of Internal Affairs will reject a request for the acquisition or termination of citizenship if the requirements have not been fulfilled, unless stipulated otherwise by this Act.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs can reject a request for the acquisition or termination of citizenship even if the requirements are fulfilled if, according to its judgment, the request for the acquisition or termination of the citizenship is to be rejected due to reasons of interest for the Republic of Croatia.

Article 27

Records are kept on Croatian citizenship.

The records on citizenship are kept by the registrar's office.

Persons born in the Republic of Croatia are entered into the citizenship records kept by the registrar's office of the person's place of birth.

Persons born abroad are entered into the citizenship records kept by the registrar's office of the domicile of the person submitting the request for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship.
Persons who acquire Croatian citizenship pursuant to the provisions of this Act and do not have a domicile in the Republic of Croatia are registered in the central records.
The central records are kept by the competent authority for general administrative affairs in the City of Zagreb.
Corrections of the data in the records on Croatian citizenship can be performed only on the basis of a decision of the competent body that handled the entry into the citizenship records.

Article 28

„Domovnica“ (Citizenship Certificate) is an official document serving as proof of Croatian citizenship, and is issued by a registrar's office.

Article 29

Croatian citizenship can be proved by a valid identity card, military identification card or by passport.
A Croatian citizen who does not have any of the documents listed in Paragraph 1 of this Article proves his Croatian citizenship with a Citizenship Certificate („Domovnica“) issued by a registrar's office on the basis of the records of citizenship.

Chapter V - TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 30

A person is considered to be a Croatian citizen if he has acquired this status pursuant to regulations which were effective until the day when this Act has come into force.
A person who belongs to the Croatian people and who on the day when this Act comes into force does not have Croatian citizenship is considered to be a Croatian citizen if on that day he has a registered domicile in the Republic of Croatia and provides a written statement saying that he considers himself a Croatian citizen.
The written statement referred to in Paragraph 2 of this Article is submitted to the police authority, i.e. to a police department, of the municipality where the person has his domicile.
The police authority, i.e. police department, determines whether the requirements of Paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article are fulfilled. If it is ascertained that all the requirements are fulfilled, it will order the entry in the records of citizenship, without issuing a written decision therein. If it determines that all the requirements have not been fulfilled, it will decline the request by a written decision.

Article 31

Forms for keeping the records of citizenship, the content of the Citizenship Certificate („Domovnica“), and the way of keeping the records of citizenship are regulated by the Minister of Internal Affairs.
The Minister of Internal Affairs determines the cost of the form of the Citizenship Certificate („Domovnica“), that is borne by the person submitting the request.

Article 32

Impediments for dismissal from the citizenship concerning military conscription (Article 18, Paragraph 1, Point 2) are regulated by the Minister of Defence with a preliminarily acquired consent of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Article 33

Regulations relating to provisions of Articles 31 and 32 of this Act will be enacted within 60 days after this Act has come into force.

Article 34

The data in the records of citizenship referred to in Article 4, Paragraph 2, and Article 20, Paragraph 2 of this Act are an official secret.

Article 35

Proceedings set in motion on the basis of the Act on Citizenship of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (the Official Gazette no. 32/77) will be completed according to the provisions of this Act.

Article 36

The ministry with competence for internal affairs and the ministry with competence for administration supervise the implementation of this Act and other regulations enacted on the basis of this Act.

The ministry with competence for internal affairs supervises the implementation of the provisions that are related to the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalization and according to international treaties, and the termination of Croatian citizenship.

The ministry with competence for administration supervises the implementation of the provisions related to the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by origin and birth within the area of the Republic of Croatia.

Article 37

With this Act coming into force, the Act on Citizenship of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (the Official Gazette no. 32/77), is repudiated.

Until the enactment of the provisions of Article 31 of this Act, the Ordinance on Keeping Records on Citizenship, Records Forms and Certificate of Citizenship Forms (the Official Gazette no. 7/78, 42/81) will be in force.

Article 38

This Act comes into force on the day of its publication in the Official Gazette.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS FROM THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE ("NARODNE NOVINE") 130/11:

Article 18.

The minister competent for administration provides a set of regulations on the content and the way of keeping records of Croatian citizenship, prescribes the content and form of the Citizenship Certificate ("Domovnica") and sets the price of the form for the Citizenship Certificate ("Domovnica").

The minister competent for internal affairs prescribes through a set of regulations the forms for the request for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalization and for the termination of Croatian citizenship, the way of keeping and the content of the records on the acquisition of Croatian citizenship by naturalization and by international treaties, and the records on the termination of Croatian citizenship.

The nature of the verification of proficiency in the Croatian language and the Latin script, the culture and social arrangement, will be prescribed by a set of regulations by the minister competent for internal affairs, with the consent of the ministers competent for education and culture.

The competent ministers will pass regulations from Paragraph 1, 2 and 3 of this Article within 6 months after the day when this Act comes into force.

Article 19.

It is considered that persons who had a domicile in the Republic of Croatia on 8th October 1991 and who had been granted permanent residence fulfil the requirements for the necessary residence in proceedings for the acquisition of Croatian citizenship.

Article 20.

All the proceedings set in motion before the day when this Act comes into force will be completed according to the provisions of the Act on Croatian citizenship (Official Gazette »Narodne novine«, no. 53/91., 70/91. – amendment, 28/92. i 113/93.)

Article 21.

Throughout the text of the Act on Croatian citizenship (Official Gazette »Narodne novine«, no. 53/91., 70/91. – amendment, 28/92. i 113/93.), the words: "territory of the Republic of Croatia", "police station" and "diplomatic or consular mission" are substituted with the words: "area of the Republic of Croatia", "police department", "diplomatic mission or consular office", in the adequate number and case.

Article 22.

This Act will be published in the Official Gazette ("Narodne Novine"), and will come into force on 1st January 2012.

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Zagreb, 28th October 2011