

**In force from October 1, 2015**

## BILL GRANTING SPANISH CITIZENSHIP TO SEPHARDIC JEWS

The Law makes the acquisition of Spanish citizenship possible for the Sephardic Jews that are descendents of those expelled from Spain in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century without renouncing their current citizenship and without requiring residency in Spain.

Read this page carefully. If you still have any doubts about this Bill, please contact [the Ministry of Justice](#).

### **1. REQUIREMENTS**

**The granting of citizenship requires the fulfillment of two requirements: first, the proof of Sephardic status and second, the proof of special connection to Spain.**

#### **1.1 How to proof the Sephardic status?**

Proof can be confirmed by the following possible evidentiary means, assessed as a whole (it's not necessary to fulfill them all):

- a) Certificate of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain (FCJE). [Visit the FCJE website](#)
- b) Certificate by the President of the Jewish community of the zone of residence or birth.
- c) Certificate from the rabbinical authority, recognized legally in the country of residence.
- d) Proof of the use of ladino or "haketia", certified by an Israeli competent entity.
- e) Birth certificate or marriage certificate "ketubah" that proves celebration in the Castilian tradition, including a certificate of validity of a Community leader or Rabbi.
- f) Report produced by the appropriate entity that proves the applicant's membership of the family names to the Sephardic lineage of Spanish origin.
- g) Any other circumstance that clearly demonstrates the status as a Sephardic Jew of Spanish origin.

#### **1.2 How to proof the special connection to Spain?**

Proof can be confirmed by the following possible evidentiary means, assessed as a whole (it's not necessary to fulfill them all):

- a) Certificates of the study of Spanish history and culture issued by an accredited public or private institution.
- b) Proof of knowledge of ladino or "haketia" language.
- c) Inclusion of the applicant or his/her direct ancestry on the lists of Sephardic families protected by Spain, that, concerning Egypt and Greece, refer to the Decree of December 29, 1948, or of others naturalized by special way of the Royal Decree of December 20, 1924. Blood relationship of the applicant with a person that meets qualification.
- d) Fulfillment of charitable, cultural, or economic activities to the benefit of Spanish persons or institutions or in Spanish territory, as well as those taking place in support of institutions aimed at the study, preservation, and dissemination of Sephardic culture.
- e) Any other circumstance that clearly demonstrates special connection to Spain. Examples: being married to a Spaniard, holding shares of a Spanish company, owning real estate or

other goods in Spain, living or having lived in Spain for at least six months, being member of a Spanish cultural or sports club.

### **1.3 Other requirements**

- a) Applicants will have to present a birth certificate,
- b) Applicants will have to present a criminal record certificate issued within the last 6 months, issued by the FBI.
- c) All required documents must be translated and, when applicable, legalized (apostille). The apostille must be translated as well. **¿Lista de traductores/Jurados, Secretaría de Estado?**
- d) TESTS. Apart from the accreditation of special connection with Spain, the applicant will be required to pass two tests:
  - First test: basic knowledge of Spanish language (DELE level A2, or higher)
  - Second test: knowledge of the Spanish Constitution and Spain's social and cultural reality.
  - There are exceptions for applicants from nationals of certain countries where Spanish is the official language, for those under 18 and for those with a legal capacity modified by court.
  - More information about the exceptions, exams and courses can be found on the [Website of the Cervantes Institute in Tel Aviv.   
http://www.cervantes.es/sobre\\_instituto\\_cervantes/direcciones\\_contacto/sedes\\_mundo.htm](http://www.cervantes.es/sobre_instituto_cervantes/direcciones_contacto/sedes_mundo.htm)

## **2. PROCEDURE**

### **2.1 Beginning**

It is an online process. Applicants will fill out an application form in Spanish at the website of the Ministry of Justice, and pay a 100 euro fee.

[Ministry of Justice application website.](#)

The system will provide the applicant with an application ID number. The application will be transmitted electronically to the General Notary Council in Spain. The Council will assign a notary in Spain capable of assessing the documents presented by the applicant to each case.

#### **2.1. Notarial Act**

Once the designated notary has reviewed the documents, and once it is deemed that the requirements previously mentioned have been fulfilled, the notary in Spain will make an appointment with the interested party for the performance of a notary act.

Thus, until there is a concrete and reasonable expectation that the granting of citizenship is feasible, the notary will not make an appointment with the interested party in order to prevent futile trips.

The act will include the original documents used as proof submitted by the interested party, and for adults, this act will also include a criminal background check for each country in

which the applicant resides or has resided in the last five years immediately prior to the application. All documents have to be translated into Spanish, when necessary, as well as authorized, legalized or notarized (apostille).

### **2.3 Resolution by the General Directorate of Registries and Notary Services**

The General Directorate of Registries and Notary Services will then request reports of the corresponding agencies. Once received, the General Directorate of Registries and Notary Services will resolve the case, judging the validity of the application.

### **2.4 Civil Registration**

Upon a positive resolution, and within one year's timeframe starting the following day the notification of the resolution, the applicant will have to swear and promise his or her fidelity to the King and obedience to the Spanish Constitution and laws before the Civil Registry of his residence (Embassy or Consulate).

The non-compliance by the interested party of the previous conditions within the established timeframe will result in the expiration of the proceeding.

## **3. DEADLINES**

Interested parties should formalize their application within three years after the law becomes effective (October 1, 2015). This deadline may be extended for an additional year if approved by the Council of Ministries.

However, the Law will remain in effect indefinitely for extraordinary cases or humanitarian reasons.

Applications will be resolved within a period of time up to 12 months from the date the application and corresponding documents are registered in the General Directorate of registries and Notary Services. If after 12 months there is no resolution, the application will be deemed invalid by means of administrative silence.

#### REFERENCES:

[http://www.cervantes.es/sobre\\_instituto\\_cervantes/direcciones\\_contacto/sedes\\_mundo.htm](http://www.cervantes.es/sobre_instituto_cervantes/direcciones_contacto/sedes_mundo.htm)

<http://www.mjusticia.gob.es/cs/Satellite/Portal/es/areas-tematicas/nacionalidad/concesion-nacionalidad>

<http://www.fcje.org/>

**SECRETARY OF STATE/SECRETARIAS DE ESTADO**

**ARIZONA:**

**Secretary of State  
Attn: Apostille Dept.  
1700 W. Washington St. Fl. 7  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007-2808  
[www.azsos.gov](http://www.azsos.gov)**

**CALIFORNIA:**

**Secretary of State  
Ronald Reagan Building  
300 S. Spring St. Fl 12<sup>th</sup>. Ste.: 12513  
Los Angeles, California 90013  
[www.sos.ca.gov/notary/authentication](http://www.sos.ca.gov/notary/authentication)**

**COLORADO:**

**Secretary of State  
Notary Program  
1700 Broadway Suite: 200  
Denver, Colorado 80290  
[www.colorado.gov](http://www.colorado.gov)**

**UTAH:**

**Utah State Capitol  
350 N. State St. Ste.: 220  
P.O. Box 142325  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114  
[www.authentications.utah.gov](http://www.authentications.utah.gov)**