



Borderwise:

Citizenship

This information sheet provides a general overview on elections, voting and the rules relating to Irish citizenship. Please note you may need legal advice to clarify your right to citizenship or to change your citizenship.



Voting

You are entitled to vote in elections in the South if you meet the following conditions

- You are aged 18 or over
- You are entitled to vote in the particular election
- You are ordinarily resident in Ireland
- If your name is on the electoral register



Who is eligible to vote?

- Irish citizens are eligible to vote in all elections and referenda in Ireland
- British citizens are eligible to vote at Dáil, European and local elections only
- EU citizens may vote at European and local elections only
- Non-EU citizens are only eligible to vote at local elections

The electoral register

The local authorities are responsible for compiling the Register of Electors. All residents of the Republic of Ireland, who are aged 18 or over can register to vote. Registration forms are available from local post offices, libraries, garda stations and local county council offices. You can check to see if you are registered at www.checktheregister.ie

Irish Citizenship

You are entitled to be an Irish citizen if you were born on the island of Ireland before 1 January 2005. People born on the island of Ireland since 1 January 2005 are entitled to be Irish citizens if:

- one of their parents is an Irish citizen or is entitled to be an Irish citizen or
- one of their parents has been lawfully living in the island of Ireland for at least three of the four years before the birth or
- one of their parents is a British citizen or
- one of their parents has an unrestricted right to live in Ireland ROI
- one of their parents has an unrestricted right to live in Northern Ireland

Going
South

Citizenship by Descent

You are automatically entitled to Irish Citizenship if at the time of your birth, one of your parents was an Irish citizen or was entitled to be an Irish citizen.

If you were born outside the island of Ireland, you may be entitled to be a citizen if you have an Irish Parent or Grandparent: If one of your parents or Grandparents was an Irish citizen at the time of your birth then you are entitled to be an Irish citizen from birth. However, before you can claim your Irish citizenship you must have your birth registered in the Foreign Births Register. If you are resident in Ireland you must register in the Foreign Births Register at the Department of Foreign Affairs. If you live abroad you must apply through your nearest Irish Embassy or Consular office abroad.

Citizenship by Naturalisation

If you are not entitled to Irish citizenship by birth or descent, you may apply for citizenship by naturalisation. To do this, you must apply to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform for a Certificate of Naturalisation. In order to get this you must fulfil a number of conditions. You must

- be legally an adult (that is be aged 18 years or married),
- be of good character (you usually have to supply a Garda report),
- have lived in the South continuously for a year immediately before applying and for at least 4 of the previous 8 years (or two of the previous four years if you are married to an Irish citizen),
- intend to continue to live in the South and
- make a declaration of fidelity and loyalty (this is required when your application has been successful. You make this declaration before the District Court).

You may apply for citizenship by naturalisation to:

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
13/14 Burgh Quay,
Dublin 2.
Lo-Call 1890 551 500
www.justice.ie

Getting an Irish passport

You may get passport application forms from Garda stations and from Post Offices. There are Passport offices in Dublin and Cork.

Passport Office Dublin
Setanta Centre
Molesworth Street
Dublin 2
Tel. +353 1 671 1633

If telephoning from Northern Ireland LoCall 0845 8504321 or email;
passportdublin@iveagh.irlgov.ie

Contact Details

Borderwise, Fermanagh House, Broadmeadow Place, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, BT74 7HR
Tel: 028 66323632 (from Northern Ireland) or 048 66323632 (from Republic Of Ireland)
Email: borderwise@citizensadvice.co.uk

