

# Acquiring Croatian Citizenship, an overview

*Please consider that this overview does not cover all the possible cases regulated by the Croatian Citizenship Act and is intended to be informative in nature. The Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia, as the competent authority, after running thorough assessment, may decide that an applicant is required to submit additional documents in order to support his/her application. If the legal prerequisites are not met, an applicant will receive a negative decision.*

1. Who can acquire Croatian citizenship?
2. Who qualifies as an emigrant?
3. How to apply and where?
4. What is the cost and waiting period?
5. Important notice
6. Applicable documentation explanation and interpretation
7. Contact information

## 1. WHO CAN ACQUIRE CROATIAN CITIZENSHIP?

### a) A child born to at least one Croatian citizen parent

If a child is born outside Croatia and at least one parent is a Croatian citizen at the time of the child's birth, the child **can obtain** Croatian citizenship by registration into the Birth Registry of the Republic of Croatia before he/she turns 21 years of age.

Parents need to register ([Registration form](#) is available at the Embassy webpage) a child at the competent diplomatic or consular mission of the Republic of Croatia (Section 3.) and present their own Croatian passport (s) or *Domovnica* + the U.S. passport (s) and birth certificate of their child, with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator.

If the parents' marriage hasn't been registered with the Croatian authorities, they need to submit also their marriage certificate with an *Apostille* seal and official translation into Croatian language by a certified translator. [Form for marriage](#) registration is available at the Embassy webpage.

If a parent, a Croatian citizen who is registering the birth of their child, is not born on the territory of the Republic of Croatia and is not registered in the Birth Registry in the Republic of Croatia, they are obliged to do their registration as well. In this case, they also need to present their birth certificate (U.S. birth certificate with *Apostille* seal and officially translated into Croatian language by a certified translator). The registration form is available at the premises of the appropriate diplomatic or consular mission according to place of residence.

If parents did not register their child before he/she turned 18, the child, i.e. the person can do it themselves after he/she turns 18 years of age, but before he/she turns 21 years of age. Such a person needs to submit a valid passport, birth certificate with an *Apostille* Seal and officially translated in Croatian language by a certified translator. In addition, the applicant needs to submit proof that at least one parent was a Croatian citizen at the moment of his/her birth (*for example parent's Domovnica or Croatian passport*).

## b) Emigrants from Croatia and their descendants

Persons who have emigrated from the territory of **present-day Croatia** before October 8th, 1991, their spouses and descendants as well as spouses of their descendants can obtain Croatian citizenship. Underage children can be included in the parents' [application](#).

The following supporting documents should be enclosed:

- completed and signed application form (available for [download](#) or at the premises of the Embassy/Consulate)
- valid passport (and proof of other citizenship (s) if the person has more than one)
- resume (biography) and a personal statement of motivation in Croatian language explaining the reason (s) for applying for Croatian citizenship, with additional details on the emigration path and timing of their emigration or that of their ancestors from the Republic of Croatia (more info on preparing a resume in [Section 6](#))
- birth certificate (with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)
  - ✓ *if the applicant is not the son/daughter of a Croatian emigrant, but rather grandson/granddaughter or even more removed, the continuity of relation to the emigrant must be proven by birth certificates (U.S. birth certificate with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator) of all intermediary relatives (e.g. not only the applicant's birth certificate is required but also parent's birth certificate proving intermediary relation to the emigrant)*
- if married, a marriage certificate, not older than 6 months (with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal record check (not older than 6 months, with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)
  - ✓ *if the applicant has more than one citizenship, criminal record checks from the country/ies of his/her other citizenship(s) are to be submitted as well*
- birth certificate of the ancestor who emigrated from Croatia
- proof of emigration from Croatia, i.e. immigration to the U.S. from Croatia (*any travel document and/or other official documents showing emigration from Croatia, including American immigrant documents, acceptance to Ellis Island etc.*)

*In case underage children are included in the application, a parent needs to submit for each child his/her passport and birth certificate (with Apostille seal and translated by a certified translator).*

*Since the application is submitted by one parent (i.e. applicant), the other parent must (foreign national) co-sign the application **in person** at the Embassy or Consulate (providing a valid ID) as proof of his/her consent. In case only one parent has custody of the child or one parent is deceased, proof thereof (with an Apostille seal and translation into Croatian by a certified translator) must be submitted.*

**c) Croats (members of the Croatian people)**

Persons who are Croatian by ethnicity, but do not have Croatian citizenship. Underage children can be included in the parents' [application](#).

The following supporting documents shall be enclosed:

- completed and signed application form (available for [download](#))
- valid passport (and proof of other citizenship(s) if the person has more than one)
- resume and personal statement of motivation in Croatian language, explaining the reason (s) for applying for Croatian citizenship with additional details on whether the person considers himself/herself as a member of the Croatian people (Croat); more info on preparing a resume in Section 6
- birth certificate (with *an Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)
- if married, a marriage certificate, not older than 6 months (with *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal record check (not older than 6 months, with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)

*✓ if the applicant has more than one citizenship than criminal record checks from the country/ies of his/her other citizenship(s) are to be submitted as well*

- proof of Croatian ethnicity or proof of promoting Croatian interests abroad (for example any legal document where Croatian ethnicity is stated AND/OR, for example: certificate from Croatian folklore groups, sports clubs, from Croatian Catholic missions or other Croatian associations abroad of which the applicant is/was a member)

*✓ if both parents of the applicant are, without doubt, members of the Croatian people (Croats), the applicant doesn't need to submit such evidence for himself/herself – he/she only needs to submit evidence for their parents (for example any legal document where parents' Croatian ethnicity is stated)*

*In case underage children are included in the application, each child' passport and birth certificate (with an Apostille seal and translation into Croatian language by a certified translator) must be submitted with the applicant's documentation.*

*Since the application is submitted by one parent (i.e. applicant), the other parent must co-sign the application in person at the Consulate (providing a valid ID) as proof of his/her consent. In case only*

*one parent has custody of the child or one parent is deceased proof thereof (with apostille and translated) must be submitted.*

#### **d) Determining of Croatian citizenship**

Persons over the age of 21, whose both parents were Croatian citizens at the time of their birth, are applying for determining of Croatian citizenship (utvrđivanje).

The following supporting documents shall be enclosed:

- completed and signed application form (available for [download](#) )
- valid passport (and proof of other citizenship (s) if the person has more than one)
- resume or biography with applicant's personal details, information relating to parents, emigration path and other citizenship (s)
- birth certificate (with an *Apostille* seal and translation into Croatian language by a certified translator)
- if married, a marriage certificate (with an *Apostille* seal and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator)
- birth or marriage certificate of the applicant's parents
- proof of Croatian citizenship of the applicant's parents (e.g. Croatian passport, *Domovnica*)
- persons who emigrated from Croatia prior to October 8, 1991 may also submit proof of former SFRY citizenship (an old passport, certificate of citizenship, military or employment records and similar).

- e) There are other legal grounds for obtaining Croatian citizenship. Comprehensive information is available on the website of the competent authority – Croatian Ministry of the Interior in [Croatian](#) as well as in [English](#), together with the [Croatian Citizenship Act](#) and all its amendments.

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## **2. WHO QUALIFIES AS AN EMIGRANT?**

An “emigrant” is a person who emigrated from the territory of the Republic of Croatia before October 8, 1991 with the intention to live abroad permanently.

*For example, an emigrant is a person who emigrated from Zagreb to the U.S. in 1978 with the intention to live abroad permanently.*

An emigrant can also be a Croat (member of the Croatian people) who emigrated from other parts of former countries of which Croatia was a member at the time of emigration. Along with instructions listed in Section 1b, such a person needs to prove that he/she is a member of the Croatian people (Croat).

*For example, an emigrant is also a Croat (member of the Croatian people) who emigrated from Bosnia and Hercegovina to the United States while Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina were part of the same former country.*

Note that the following persons are **not** considered emigrants: I. emigrated from the territory of the Republic of Croatia on the basis of an international agreement or II. denounced their Croatian citizenship, III. who simply changed the place of residence within the former country Croatia was a part of, or IV. who emigrated from Croatia abroad but did not have Croatian republic citizenship nor was Croatia their usual place of residence.

*For example, a person who moved from Croatia to Montenegro in 1984 is not considered an emigrant because Croatia and Montenegro were part of the same former country. Also, if someone emigrated from Croatia in 1993 this person is not considered an emigrant in this sense because it was after October 8, 1991.*

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### 3. HOW TO APPLY AND WHERE TO APPLY?

In the United States you may apply through the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Washington D.C. Consular Department or three Consulates General: New York, NY; Los Angeles, CA and Chicago, IL. **Which one to contact and make an appointment?** That depends **on where you reside** (in which state) within the United States.

**Please visit** the website of the [Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Washington](#) regarding the information on consular jurisdiction.

**Submitting a citizenship application can only be done in person. It cannot be done by mail or by a proxy.**

You can make an appointment **by e-mail or telephone at the appropriate office**. You will need to bring all the necessary documents referenced herein to the appointment and pay the consular fee (more info in [Section 4](#)) upon submitting your application.

*During the processing of your application, which is done by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia, consular officers will contact you pertaining to your application. When the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia reaches a decision on your application, you will be contacted by the consular officers and instructed on how to proceed.*

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### 4. WHAT IS THE COST AND WAITING PERIOD?

Consular fees are under review every 6 months due to the exchange rate between EURO and the U.S. dollar and for the exact amount of the consular fee, **please contact, prior to submitting your application the [competent consular office](#)** according to your residence.

Consular fees are non-refundable, regardless of the outcome of the application. The fees are payable upon submitting the application either by **personal cheque or money order**.

The waiting period is not strictly defined and depends on each individual case. The expected waiting time for a fully completed application is around 18-24 months, but may take longer in some cases.

## 5. IMPORTANT NOTICE

All decisions on citizenship applications are made by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. It is strongly advised to submit a fully completed application with all the necessary documents in order to avoid later corrections and updates to the application and reduce the length of the waiting period. Any changes in contact information (e.g. new address or phone number) or personal information (name change) during the process, i.e. after submitting the application and paying the fee, must be communicated to the Consulate General so the application can be updated.

Name in the applicant's passport must match the name in the applicant's birth, marriage certificate(s), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal record check.

Documents from the U.S. Archives (manifests, passenger lists, naturalization documents etc.) must be certified by the [National Archives and Records Administration](#) and translated to Croatian language by official translator.

A necessary prerequisite for obtaining Croatian citizenship is that the personal information (i.e. name, date and place of birth) of applicants or their parents/ancestors either matches up with the personal information reflected in Croatian registries or that proof of legal change of name in the United States is submitted with the application.

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## 6. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTATION EXPLANATION AND INTERPRETATION

### **Apostille Seal**

All American legal documents such as Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal record check, birth, marriage or death certificate (s) etc. require an *Apostille* seal/stamp to be valid in Croatia, which is obtained directly **from the Secretary of State where document is issued.**

### **U. S. Passport**

Travel document that serves as proof of identity and citizenship. Needs to be valid. Name in the applicant's passport must match the name in the applicant's birth, marriage certificate(s), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal record check.

### **Resume/biography**

A resume of the applicant must be written in Croatian. The resume should include his/her name, date and place of birth, address, education, current employment, parents' names, dates and places of birth of the parents, and the parents' emigration path (if applicable). The format of the resume is not defined; any format may be used as long as it contains the necessary information.

### **Personal statement of motivation**

A written statement of the applicant must be written in either Croatian or translated into Croatian with an enclosed English version (translated by a certified translator). It should explain the motivation and reasons of the applicant for applying for Croatian citizenship.

### **Translation, i.e. translated document**

The official language in Croatia is Croatian language. Foreign Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal record check, birth, marriage or death certificate (s) etc. need to be translated into Croatian language by a certified translator in order to be used in Croatia by Croatian authorities. In certain cases, translation of other supporting documents submitted with the application may be deemed necessary by the competent authority during the process. A directory of certified translators/interpreters in the United States is available at: <https://www.atanet.org/directory/>

**All application forms** are available at the premises of appropriate Embassy or Consulate General or online at:

<https://mup.gov.hr> > Građani > Moji dokumenti > Državljanstvo > Dokumenti i linkovi

There are 4 application forms pertaining to obtaining Croatian citizenship:

1. Over 18 years of age applicant applying alone ([Section 1b](#) and [1c](#)) ([download](#))
2. Over 18 years of age applicant including his child(ren) ([Section 1b](#) and [1c](#)) ([download](#))
3. Only for child(ren) ([Section 1b](#) and [1c](#)) ([download](#))
4. For determining Croatian citizenship ([Section 1d](#)) ([download](#))


**Birth certificate** – must be certified with an Apostille seal as described in Section 6a and translated into Croatian language by a certified translator.

VERIFY PRESENCE OF ODH WATERMARK      HOLD TO LIGHT TO VIEW

Reg. Dist. No. 43


Primary Reg. Dist. No. 4304

**Ohio Department of Health**  
**VITAL STATISTICS**  
**CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH**



Certificate No. [REDACTED]

<b>CHILD</b>	1. CHILD'S NAME (First, Middle, Last, Suffix) [REDACTED]		
	2. TIME OF BIRTH (24-Hr.) [REDACTED]	3. SEX [REDACTED]	4. DATE OF BIRTH (Mo/Day/Yr.) [REDACTED]
	5a. FACILITY NAME (If not included, give street and number) [REDACTED]		
	5b. CITY, TOWN OR LOCATION OF BIRTH WILLOUGHBY		5c. COUNTY OF BIRTH LAKE
<b>ATTENDANT</b>	6a. ATTENDANT'S NAME [REDACTED]		6b. ATTENDANT'S TITLE M.D.
<b>MOTHER</b>	7a. MOTHER'S CURRENT LEGAL NAME (First, Middle, Last, Suffix) [REDACTED]		7b. DATE OF BIRTH (Mo/Day/Yr.) [REDACTED]
	7c. MOTHER'S LAST NAME PRIOR TO FIRST MARRIAGE [REDACTED]		7d. BIRTH PLACE (State, Territory, or Foreign Country) OHIO
	8a. STREET AND NUMBER OF MOTHER'S RESIDENCE [REDACTED]		8b. APT. NO. [REDACTED]
	8c. STATE, TERRITORY, OR FOREIGN COUNTRY [REDACTED]		8d. ZIP CODE 44094
<b>FATHER</b>	9a. FATHER'S CURRENT LEGAL NAME (First, Middle, Last, Suffix) [REDACTED]		9b. DATE OF BIRTH (Mo/Day/Yr.) [REDACTED]
	9c. FATHER'S LAST NAME PRIOR TO FIRST MARRIAGE [REDACTED]		9d. BIRTH PLACE (State, Territory, or Foreign Country) OHIO
	10a. REGISTRAR'S SIGNATURE [REDACTED]		
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FILING</b>			10b. DATE FILED BY REGISTRAR (Mo/Day/Yr.) [REDACTED]



**Rena M. Bolser**  
**State Registrar**

APR 19 2024

*Rena M. Bolser*

I HEREBY CERTIFY THIS DOCUMENT IS AN EXACT COPY OF THE RECORD ON FILE WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

REV. 2010

VERIFY PRESENCE OF ODH WATERMARK      HOLD TO LIGHT TO VIEW



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
**VITAL RECORDS**  
WARNING: IT IS ILLEGAL TO DUPLICATE THIS COPY BY PHOTOSTAT OR PHOTOGRAPH

### Certification of Birth

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] State File Number: [REDACTED]  
Time of Birth: 8:00 AM Date Filed: [REDACTED]  
Date Issued: FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Name: [REDACTED]

Sex: FEMALE  
Place of Birth: ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Parent: [REDACTED] Parent: [REDACTED]

Age: 26 Age: 27  
Place of Birth: [REDACTED] Place of Birth: [REDACTED]

This is to certify that this is a true copy of the record which is on file in the Pennsylvania Department of Health, in accordance with the Vital Statistics Law of 1953, as amended.

*Lisa A. Hasselbrook*  
Lisa A. Hasselbrook  
State Registrar



**Important notice:** birth certificate must have clear data about city of birth (if under place of birth, location of county or state of birth is cited, without an actual city of the birth, this document will not be accepted as valid). Specimen:

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STATE OF OHIO  
**OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS**

### CERTIFICATION OF BIRTH

STATE FILE NUMBER [REDACTED] DATE RECORD FILED [REDACTED]

NAME [REDACTED]

DATE OF BIRTH [REDACTED] SEX [REDACTED]

BIRTHPLACE OHIO FATHER'S NAME [REDACTED]

MOTHER'S NAME [REDACTED]

MAIDEN NAME [REDACTED] FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE [REDACTED]

MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE [REDACTED]

Note: This is a true certification of the name and birth facts as recorded in the Office of Vital Statistics, Columbus, Ohio. Witness my signature and seal of the Department of Health this 07 day of October, 2014

*Judith B. [Signature]*  
State Registrar of Vital Statistics

H 4 24 2172

CENTRAL LOCATION

VOID WITHOUT WATERMARK OR IF ALTERED OR ERASED  
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**Marriage certificate** - certificate of marriage proving a person is married. Must be certified with apostille as described in Section 6a and translated into Croatian by a certified translator.

**CERTIFIED CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE**

**THE STATE OF OHIO**      License No: [REDACTED]  
**Cuyahoga County ss.**

**IN THE PROBATE  
COURT**

I, **ANTHONY J. RUSSO, PRESIDING JUDGE** of the Probate Court within and for the County of Cuyahoga, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct Transcript, taken from the Marriage Records in the office, where the same are by law required to be kept, to wit:

**THE STATE OF OHIO**  
**Cuyahoga County ss.**

I certify that on: 10/31/2020

[REDACTED]      DOB: [REDACTED]

and

[REDACTED]      DOB: [REDACTED]


were by me legally joined in marriage.

ANN T. MANNEN


IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of said Probate Court at the City of Cleveland, in said County,

On March 1st, 2024

ANTHONY J. RUSSO, PRESIDING JUDGE



TIMOTHY P. MOONEY  
DEPUTY CLERK



**Apostille Seal**, issued by the Secretary of State of Ohio:

**APOSTILLE**

(Convention de la Haye du 5 octobre 1961)

1. Country: United States of America

This public document

2. has been signed by ANTHONY J. RUSSO

3. acting in the capacity of Judge of the Probate Court

4. bears the seal/stamp of Probate Court, CUYAHOGA County

**CERTIFIED**

5. at Columbus, Ohio  
March 18, 2024

6.

7. by the Secretary of State of Ohio.

8. No. [REDACTED]

9. Seal/Stamp:

10. Signature:



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frank LaRose".

Frank LaRose  
Secretary of State of Ohio

This Apostille certifies only the authenticity of the signature of the official who signed the document, the capacity in which that official acted, and where appropriate, the identity of the seal or stamp which the document bears. This Apostille does not imply that the contents of the document(s) are correct, nor that they have the approval of the office. This Apostille is not valid for use anywhere within the United States of America, its territories or possessions.

**FBI Criminal record check** – must NOT be older than 6 months at the time of the submission of the application and must be translated into Croatian by a certified translator.

7 (Rev. 08-10-2016)



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Criminal Justice Information Services Division  
Clarksburg, WV 26306



Date: 05-11-2024

The Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has completed the following fingerprint submission:

**Subject Name**



**Search Completed Result**

05-11-2024



A SEARCH OF THE FINGERPRINTS PROVIDED BY THIS INDIVIDUAL HAS REVEALED NO PRIOR ARREST DATA AT THE FBI. THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE FURTHER CRIMINAL HISTORY AT THE STATE OR LOCAL LEVEL.

Date of Birth:



Social Security number:



The result of the above response is only effective for the date the submission was originally completed. For more updated information, please submit new fingerprints of the Subject.

In order to protect Personally Identifiable Information, as of August 17, 2009, FBI policy has changed to no longer return the fingerprint cards. This form will serve as the FBI's official response.

This Identity History Summary (IdHS) is provided pursuant to 28 CFR 16.30-16.34 solely for you to conduct a personal review and/or obtain a change, correction, or updating of your record. **This IdHS is not provided for the purpose of licensing or employment or any other purpose enumerated in 28 CFR 20.33.**

Any questions may be addressed to the Customer Service Group at 304-625-5590. You may also visit the website at [www.fbi.gov/checks](http://www.fbi.gov/checks) for further instructions.

Chris Ormerod  
Section Chief  
Biometric Services Section  
Criminal Justice Information  
Services Division

**Important: FBI Criminal Record Check** must be certified with Apostille stamp from the Department of State, [Authentications Office](#) in DC:

**APOSTILLE**  
*(Convention de La Haye du 5 octobre 1961)*

1. Country: United States of America

This public document

2. has been signed by Chris Ormerod

3. acting in the capacity of Section Chief, Biometric Services Section

4. bears the seal/stamp of U. S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation

**Certified**

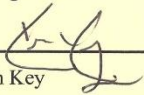
5. at Washington, D.C.

6. the fourth of July, 2024

7. by Assistant Authentication Officer, United States Department of State

8. No. ██████████

9. Seal/Stamp:

10. Signature:  
  
Keith Key

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Embassy of the Republic of Croatia**

2343 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008-2853  
tel. (202) 588-5899  
fax. (202) 588-8936  
E-mail: [crocons.washington@mvep.hr](mailto:crocons.washington@mvep.hr)  
Web page: <https://mvep.gov.hr/us>

### **Consulate General of the Republic of Croatia in Chicago**

737 N. Michigan Avenue Suite 1030  
Chicago, IL 60611  
tel. (312) 482-9902  
fax: (312) 482-9987  
Email: [crocons.chicago@mvep.hr](mailto:crocons.chicago@mvep.hr)

### **Consulate General of the Republic of Croatia in Los Angeles**

11766 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1250  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
Phone: (310) 477-1009  
Telefax: (310) 477-1866  
E-mail: [crocons.la@mvep.hr](mailto:crocons.la@mvep.hr)

### **Consulate General of the Republic of Croatia in New York**

820 Second Avenue 18th floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Phone: + 1 (646) 273-2700  
Telefax: (212) 599-3106  
E-Mail: [crocons.newyork@mvep.hr](mailto:crocons.newyork@mvep.hr)