

Policy Guideline

Determination or change of nationality

OHR/PG/2025/6 – 15 September 2025

1. This OHR Policy Guideline provides guidance on determination and change of official nationality. It does not replace the applicable Staff Regulations and Staff Rules or relevant administrative issuances, which prevail in case of conflict with the provisions in this guideline.
2. This guidance applies to all categories of staff for:
 - a. Determination of official nationality upon recruitment: When a new staff member has multiple nationalities, the Human Resources Officer will conduct and document a determination of official nationality for UN purposes.
 - b. Determination of official nationality upon obtaining or renouncing a nationality: During active service, staff members may renounce or obtain new nationality through legal procedures such as naturalization. According to Staff Rule 1.5, staff members are responsible for supplying relevant information both during the application process and subsequently for the purpose of determining their status under the Staff Regulations and Rules and relevant administrative arrangements. This includes reporting any change to nationality. When a staff member has renounced or obtained a new nationality, the Human Resources Officer will conduct and document a determination of official nationality for UN purposes.
 - c. Change of official nationality upon request from a serving staff member: A staff member may also request a change of official nationality without renouncing or obtaining a new nationality: Such requests are only considered when it is established that an error was made in determining the official nationality at the time of recruitment or when there is substantial evidence supporting the request.¹
3. In accordance with Staff Rule 4.3, the United Nations only recognizes one nationality for a staff member. When a staff member has been legally accorded nationality by more than one Member State, the official nationality will be that of the Member State with which the staff member is most closely associated.
4. A change of nationality may impact eligibility for benefits and entitlements, including home leave, education grant, family visit travel, and repatriation grant. Nationality may also have taxation implications, including for nationals of the United States of America.²

¹ Staff members may request rectification of errors in accordance with ST/AI/2010/2 on *Request for rectification of date of birth or of other personal data*.

² The United Nations reimburses income taxes due to United States tax authorities on United Nations salaries and emoluments regardless of the official nationality of the staff member. For more, please refer to the Information Circular on payment of United States income taxes for the current year.

5. Successful candidates of the young professionals programme who were external applicants or "G to N" candidates³, as defined in ST/AI/2012/2/Rev.1 on *Young professionals programme* or its successor, are not eligible to change their official nationality from that used to participate in the programme.

Criteria used for determination or change of official nationality

6. Determination of official nationality or the consideration of a request to change official nationality will take into account the following elements:
 - a. The staff member's birth country
 - b. The country or countries in which the staff member resided prior to joining the UN
 - c. The most recently acquired nationality and the will of the staff member
 - d. Other data that would be indicative of the country with which the staff member has the closest ties, such as:
 - i. Permanent address at the time of application
 - ii. Country of education
 - iii. Location of the staff member's family
 - iv. Country where the staff member maintains a residence
 - v. Time spent in a country
 - vi. Investments in a country
 - vii. Any other relevant factors
7. When a staff member has obtained an additional nationality by intent after having undergone a required process to become a naturalized citizen, in most cases the country of naturalization will become the staff member's nationality for UN purposes.⁴ However, the above elements will also be taken into account.

Criteria that may not be considered in determination or change of official nationality

8. In accordance with jurisprudence⁵, the following elements must not be considered when determining official nationality:
 - a. Avoidance of the obligation of the UN to pay both international benefits and reimbursement of income taxes;
 - b. Failure of a staff member to renounce citizenship of a country of which the staff member did not wish to be considered a national;
 - c. Actions taken by national authorities in granting passports or exercising powers of taxation.

³ "G to N" candidates are applicants to the young professionals programme who are currently serving staff in the General Service and related categories, who are nationals of the participating member states and who meet the eligibility criteria for external applicants to the programme, in accordance with ST/AI/2012/2/Rev.1.

⁴ Acquisition of a United States nationality does not automatically require the staff member's official nationality to change to the United States. As with any other nationality, a review will be conducted to determine official nationality.

⁵ United Nations Appeals Tribunal Judgment No. 62 of 1955

Procedure for determination or change of official nationality

9. Upon recruitment, nationality is initially determined based on the candidate's entry in their profile in Inspira. The HR partner should request supporting documentation to conduct a determination of official nationality. If no supporting documentation is provided, the determination should be made based on the information provided in the candidate profile.
10. If a staff member acquires or renounces a nationality, they must report this change to the HR partner to conduct a determination of official nationality. The HR partner should request supporting documentation to conduct said determination.
11. If a staff member wishes to request a change of their official nationality, they must submit a request and supporting documentation to the HR partner.
12. The staff member should be informed about the criteria for determining their official nationality and must be informed in writing of the outcome of the determination.
13. Should the staff member disagree with the determination made, they may be given the opportunity to provide additional evidence and documentation for review and final decision.