



Strasbourg, 31 May 1995
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CDL (95) 27

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW

REPUBLIC OF LATVIA
AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW ON CITIZENSHIP

The Republic of Latvia Saeima has adopted and the State President promulgates the following law:

AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW ON CITIZENSHIP

To make the following amendments to the Law on Citizenship (Republic of Latvia Saeima and the Cabinet of Ministers *Zinotājs*, 1994, No. 17):

1. To supplement **Article 2** with 1¹, 1² and 1³ in the following wording:

“1¹) Latvians and Livs whose permanent residence is in Latvia, who have registered by March 31, 1996, according to the procedures established by law and who have no other citizenship or who have received an expatriation permit from the state of their former citizenship, if such permit is provided for by the laws of that state;

1²) women whose permanent residence is in Latvia and who, in accordance with Article 7 of the August 23, 1919 Republic of Latvia “Law on Citizenship”, had lost their Republic of Latvia citizenship and their descendants, if these individuals have registered according to the procedures established by law except for those individuals who had acquired the citizenship of another state after May 4, 1990;

1³) persons whose permanent residence is in Latvia and who have registered according to the procedures established by law and who have completed a full educational course in a general education/Latvian language school or have completed the Latvian language course in a general education school with both Latvian and Russian language courses, thereby having acquired a basic primary education in such a school or the general secondary education, if these individuals are not citizens of another state or have received an expatriation permit from the state of their former citizenship, if such permit is provided for by the laws of that state;”.

2. To delete the number “1” in **Article 11, paragraph 1, subparagraph 5**.

3. To supplement **Article 12, paragraph 4** with a second sentence in the following wording:

“The persons listed in Article 21 of this Law are exempted from the testing of knowledge on the basic principles of the Republic of Latvia Satversme (Constitution), the text of the State anthem and the history of Latvia.”

4. In Article 13:

to amend **paragraph 1, subparagraph 1** to read:

"1) who are Latvian or Liv and have repatriated to Latvia after March 31, 1996;"

to amend **paragraph 1, subparagraph 5** to read:

"5) who have graduated from a general education school with the Latvian language as the language of instruction or from the Latvian language course in a general education school with both Latvian and Russian language courses and thereby having acquired a basic primary education or a general secondary education in such a school;"

to add the following sentence to **paragraph 1, subparagraph 7**:

"This provision is also to be applied to those spouses whose marriage has ended with the death of the other spouse (the Latvian citizen).";

to delete **paragraph 1, subparagraph 8**:

to supplement **paragraph 5** with the following text:

"When granting citizenship to an individual on the basis of outstanding service for the benefit of Latvia, the provisions of Article 12 (except for paragraph 1, subparagraph 7) of this Law do not apply.";

to supplement **Article 13** with a new **paragraph 6** with the following text:

"(6) A person who is to be granted citizenship on the basis of outstanding service for the benefit of Latvia shall submit to the Saeima an application to be granted such citizenship. The application shall include the person's autobiography and a notice stating that there are no facts which would indicate that the restrictions listed in Article 11 of this Law apply."

5. To replace in Article 17 the words "Ministry of the Interior" with the words "Naturalization Board".

6. To add to Article 18 after the word "born" (male case) the word "born" (female case).

* This amendment applies merely to a Latvian language specification by which both the masculine and feminine conjugation of the verb *born* are included.

7. To amend **Article 21** to read:

" In reviewing the applications for naturalization, the following persons are exempted from taking the Latvian language examination:

1) persons, who have acquired general, special secondary, higher or vocational education (vocational secondary school, vocational gymnasium, trade school) with the Latvian language as the language of instruction;

2) persons with category I invalid status who have been declared invalids for life, as well as persons with category II and III invalid status for sight, hearing or speech disabilities;

3) persons, who are eligible to be naturalized in accordance with Article 13, paragraphs 3 and 6 of this Law, if they have reached the pension/retirement age set by law."

8. To replace in **Article 24** the words "Supreme Court" with the words "Rīga District Court".

Transitional provisions

Persons, who meet the requirements for the categories listed in Article 2, paragraphs 1¹, 1² and 1³ and have paid the state duty for the submission of naturalization applications, shall be reimbursed for the state duty.

This Law shall take effect on the day following its promulgation

This Law was adopted by the Saeima on March 16, 1995.

G. ULMANIS
State President

Rīga, March 22, 1995

For purposes of interpretation,
the Latvian language text is to be
regarded as official.