Second Passports

Obtaining a second passport could be one of the best investments you'll ever make. It offers the lifelong benefit of having more options for living, travelling, doing business, investing, and potentially even saving you a fortune in taxes.

A Second Passport is not just for the *"James Bonds"* and super wealthy of this world. The truth is that it's possible for ANYONE to obtain dual citizenship.

With a second passport at hand, you can dramatically increase your personal and economic freedom.

Having dual citizenship, or even multiple citizenships, Yes you can have more then two, is an important step to internationalising your life so that no single government 'Controls' you.

Looking after your growing wealth, maintaining a business or Businesses, and balancing family life all at the same time is hard work. You don't need to worry about what happens if there is civil unrest or if your government suddenly decides to raise the tax rates.

Now if you have 'citizenship insurance'. and your second passport, the choice and Control is all yours.

A second passport will ensure that you reap all the benefits – tax optimization, improved travel potential, protection against controlling governments and more – counterbalanced by an acceptable (to you) level of risk.

The 6 Benefits of a Second Passport & Dual Citizenship

1. More Visa-Free Travel

People from countries like China or Lebanon know all too well how many opportunities are not available to them just because they happened to be born in a country with a passport that doesn't make international travel very easy.

But even Americans can significantly expand their travel freedom with another passport. An American passport grants citizens visa-free access to 157 countries.

However, Americans need to apply for visas to go to a number of countries, including Russia and China, which can be time-consuming and costly.

But obtaining an Italian passport, for example, gives an American visa-free travel to 161 countries, including the right to work and live anywhere in Europe.

That's a huge added benefit – and expands the number of countries an American can move to, hassle-free, from 1 to 27.

Meanwhile, getting a Chilean passport gives you visa-free access to all of South America and even Russia, and a possibility to live in any South American country (except Venezuela) under the Mercosur's freedom of movement agreement.

A second passport could even give you more travel options during potential COVID lockdowns. For instance, US citizens have been banned from the EU for much of 2020, but dual Italian passport holders could travel the whole European Union.

And although more travel freedom is the most obvious benefit of a second passport, it's not the only one.

One of the most important and beneficial ones is that…

2. You always have a place to go to (no matter what happens in your home country)

A second passport is what I call the ultimate insurance policy.

And 2020 has shown us all we need it.

It's a tool you can use to get out of town if you ever need to.

That could mean escaping cities destroyed by rioting and looting– which sadly, could be more prevalent as Americans clash over whoever gets elected.

Or it could be extreme lockdowns, natural disasters, or the rise of extremist politicians. Whenever a country is struck by a crisis, it is increasingly difficult for people to leave. Without the right passport, visa, citizenship, or residency in the country you are trying to flee to, you might not even be allowed to board a plane.

For most of 2020, Americans have been banned from entering Europe. In fact, the US passport has never been weaker. But a passport from just one country in the European Union could give you access to all 26 countries in the Schengen area.

Just one passport from the right place means not just the freedom to travel, but live, work, invest, and raise a family in almost all of Europe.

And even a second citizenship from outside of the Eurozone gives you at least one other option besides your home country, if political tensions continue to escalate.
If it gets bad enough, you want an option to get out when your country starts to resemble Venezuela for instance.

When hyperinflation destroyed the economy in the socialist nation, many people were stuck. With just one passport, they were not prepared for the chaos, and we're left with no options but to stay.

This is why we call a second passport the ultimate life insurance: you sure as hell hope you will never need it, but if you do – you will be glad you have it.

3. Protection from Travel and Immigration Control

You probably never realised this, but your passport doesn't actually belong to you. It's the property of the government and it is as easy for them to take it away as it is to give it to you.

Take the example of Edward Snowden.

> *After leaking confidential documents to the press, Edward Snowden became a target of the US government, and in an instant, they cancelled his passport. Given that this was his only passport, this meant that he could not legally travel anywhere. Snowden was then left stranded in the international transit area at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport for over a month, until Russia granted him asylum.*

If Mr. Snowden had held dual citizenship before he became a target, he could have used his second passport to continue travelling, living and doing business in another country.

But it's not limited to extreme cases like whistleblowing and government espionage.

On December 30, 2015, when no one was looking, the US government passed H.R. 22 (The FAST Act), which authorises them to revoke your passport if they believe, in their sole discretion, that you owe $50,000 in taxes (which is indexed over time).

Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, all have similar laws that allow the minister (government) to cancel your passport at any time, all they need is a simple court order, or in some cases the minister in charge can do it themselves.

It's important to note that they don't actually have to prove any wrongdoing.

They can make a simple allegation. It could even be a clerical error. And in an instant, they can cancel your passport.

They started enforcing this law in 2018 and as of May 2019 they started the process to revoke the passports of almost 389,000 people.

If you have only one passport, then a single government holds total control over where you can travel, conduct business and live.

Putting this much trust into a single entity that has a history of vastly abusing its power is just not a good idea.

You also have no guarantee that the government won't expand its powers further, for example, to restrict travel for people who hold anti-government views, or a battery or other authoritarian causes.

4. Distancing yourself from foreign policy repercussions

Citizens of certain nationalities have more cultural and political enemies than others.

America's world politics have made US citizens very unpopular around the world, to the point that they have become targets for terrorism.

On the other hand, nobody ever threatens to bomb a plane full of St Lucian's.

5. Potential to drastically reduce your taxes

Taking advantage of your second citizenship or residency by moving abroad has the potential to significantly reduce your tax burden.

Depending on the tax laws of your adopted country, you may even find yourself paying no taxes at all. Many countries around the world have substantially lighter tax burdens than much of the Western world.

6. The option to renounce your current citizenship

Being a dual passport holder means you will have the option of renouncing your current citizenship.

It's a radical step to even think about for most people, but having multiple citizenships means that you'll always have the option.

US citizens, in particular, can drastically reduce their tax burden by renouncing their US citizenship.

Even if you choose not to ever do it, having the ability to do so if your situation ever changes gives you tremendously more freedom in your life.

And many other benefits...

Depending on the country of your new citizenship, you may even get other benefits: Brazil and Russia, for example, do not extradite their own citizens.

Additionally, your unborn children usually also receive your second citizenship. Giving them this asset, which can be passed onto future generations is likely one of the most beneficial things you could ever do for them.

Why do we Have Passports?

Did you know that no one in the world even had passports before World War I?

Everyone was a citizen of somewhere, but they had no documents that they needed to bring along when crossing international borders.

How times have changed!

Today your passport defines your identity as much as it defines the places where you're able to go and the countries you're able to live in, invest in and bring your family to if you wish.

It basically divides people by the lucky sperm club,

If your parents were lucky enough to have you in a good country' you have a good passport, and all the perks that come with that citizenship, but if your parents where in an unlucky country then your your shit out of luck, and have a hard time moving to a place where there is greater opportunity,

this is why we have refugees and people smugglers, another government made problem that do gooders around the world want governments to solve, simple answer get rid of passports.

Now that is not going to happen so that's why passport shopping is a thing.

Throughout history, governments have used citizenship as a tool of economic enslavement, rather than a cherished gift.

It used to be that a passport was a tool of convenience; your ruler gave you a set of papers to show to another ruler to request your safe passage through their territory.

Now, passports are just another form of government identification. If your government takes your passport away, you might as well just lock yourself in your house.

Owe a small balance to the Taxman? They can and will get a court order to cancel your passport, or refuse to even issue one to you at all.

The proposals that have floated around parliament houses globally to limit the freedom of movement among citizens are mind-boggling.

In fact, a US, UK or other 'western' passport can even be a strike against you in a tough, yet unlikely, situation. Select countries are more likely to be a target in a terrorist attack.

Why not have two passports, then?

Even in times of peace, have fun getting into Iran with a US passport, and forget about doing business there.

Countries around the world know this, too. Places like Switzerland and Singapore have made it harder to get a second passport from them because the worldwide demand for second passports is increasing.

Wealthy Chinese, Russians, and Middle Easterners realise the value of diversifying beyond their own countries, and many Americans overseas are learning the hard lesson of just how much a government can limit your options.

A Swiss businessman could outpace an American businessman simply because they can do business in more places around the world, and with fewer restrictions.

I think you now see why you need a second passport and getting one sooner rather than later so that you can gain back your personal and financial freedom on a global stage.

The World's First Official (Modern) Passport

From**:**
https://www.passporthealthusa.com/passports-and-visas/blog/2018-4-the-worlds-first-official-passport/

The concept of a worldwide passport standard isn't actually that old. In fact, the system began less than a century ago.

The standard emerged for the League of Nations shortly after World War I in 1920. With the war over, many countries looked for any solution to maintain peace.

Leaders in government around the world made some changes to achieve this goal. United States Legislators decided to mint a new passport to limit the flow of immigrants to the country.

They also passed the Immigration Act in 1921 (also known as the Emergency Quota Act). The act restricted the number of immigrants admitted from any other country.

The quota was 3 percent of the number of immigrants from the same country (like France) living in the U.S on an annual basis. Interestingly, the Census Bureau calculated that the number of new immigrants admitted into the U.S. fell from 805,228 in 1920 to 309,556 in 1921 to 1922.

Following an agreement among the League of Nations to begin standardising passports, the world's first passport, dubbed "Old Blue," was issued in 1920. Even after the World War ended, the format for Old Blue was standardised in the latter part of 1920.

The League of Nations met in France where they specified the size, layout, and design of passports for 42 nations. The passport was revised again in 1947.

The league expanded Old Blue into a 32-page document. The template for the 32-page booklet measured exactly 15.5 cm 6.1 inches x 4.1 inches. In that initial book, the first four pages showed the owner's facial characteristics, occupation, and residence.

The passport layout also made some assumptions about the owner. The booklet included a box for the photo of the spouse and space for the names of his children. This was included under the idea that each passport owner was a married male travelling with their family.

The majority of the passport was in French, with at least one page in a different language.

Finally, a cardboard cover included the country's name and coat of arms centred on it. This new booklet would cost a traveller 10 francs.

The Old Blue passport remained in use for decades until a burgundy-colored passport was adopted in 1988. Other than a few changes over the years, this was the first replacement for that initial passport.

How To Get a Second Passport

Here are the four ways ANYONE can get a second passport:

1. **Ancestry** - If you are lucky enough to have ancestors from the right country, you may be eligible for an almost FREE second citizenship by descent

2. **Naturalisation** - After you live in a country long enough (use time), you can become eligible for a second passport through naturalisation

3. **Buy** - This involves taking advantage of a citizenship by investment program to legally buy citizenship and acquire a second passport.

4. **Flexibility** - These are unconventional ways to get a second passport such as giving birth in a foreign country, marrying a foreign citizen or even changing your religion...

So let's look at these in a little more depth

#1: Get a Second Passport Through Citizenship by Descent & Ancestry

By far, the easiest way to get a passport is by demonstrating you have parents, grandparents, or in some cases, even great-grandparents from the right place in the world. If you happen to be part of what I call the “lucky bloodline club”, then you might be entitled to citizenship based on ancestry.

This means you can get a second passport in a very short time and at a very low cost. Because of that, you should explore this option first if you are interested in getting a passport.

Examples of countries which often grant citizenship to the descendants of emigrants are:

- Armenia
- England
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Poland
- Portugal
- And many more…

Requirements for eligibility vary from country to country, but you will usually have to demonstrate an uninterrupted lineage between you and your ancestors.

Most often, “uninterrupted” means that no ancestor renounced or lost their citizenship before passing it onto the next descendant in your lineage.

To get a better idea of how this process works, you can download a free in-depth intelligence report on How To Get an Italian Passport & Citizenship By Descent here.

Even if you don’t have Italian ancestors this report will give you a better idea of how citizenship by descent works.

In most cases, you’ll need to start by setting up an appointment with your nearest consulate. Don’t be surprised if they make you wait months. But be sure to spend that time hunting down and obtaining the necessary documents (and, if required, have them officially translated and certified).

Make sure you understand exactly what is required for you to bring to the appointment. (Some countries will want to see a police report showing that you’re not a criminal. This takes a while to push through the right channels, so don’t delay.)

You’ll likely need to bring your birth certificate, marriage and / or divorce certificate (if applicable) and passport, as well as the birth certificates of any children you have.

You’ll also need birth certificates (and death certificates) for your ancestors on both your maternal and paternal lines, going all the way back to the ancestor. You’ll need any naturalisation certificates those ancestors acquired as well.

#2: Get a Second Passport through Citizenship By Naturalisation (Time)

In most countries around the world, you can acquire citizenship in a country by first becoming a legal resident, and then maintaining that residency for a certain number of years (generally at least five years).

Some countries make it harder than others for foreigners to obtain residency and citizenship.

In the United States, immigration rules make it difficult for foreigners to obtain a Green Card, but in Panama, for example, the process is very quick, affordable and easy.

After five years, you can apply to become a Panamanian citizen.

In some countries (like Panama), you don’t even need to actually spend significant amounts of time in the country to become eligible to apply for a second passport (but it’s still always advisable to be able to demonstrate strong ties to the country in order to be approved).

This is a great option for people who do not want to uproot their lives right away, but want a place to go no matter what happens in the world, and a second passport a few years down the line.

Keep in mind, however, that residency (and passport) opportunities change frequently. They are heavily subject to the laws of supply and demand.

Countries generally make it easier for foreigners to establish residency and obtain citizenship when they need money, or talent.

But once that need is no longer there, they'll close the loophole and shut down the residency paths.

So it's important to start taking these steps now – while they are still available.

#3: Get a Second Passport Through Citizenship By Investment (Buy)

The fastest (but certainly not the cheapest) way to acquire a second passport is through investing money in the country in exchange for a passport.

It's called economic citizenship or Citizenship By Investment and is a legitimate way to buy a second passport and citizenship.

These programs often take either one of two forms.

The first is that you make an outright donation to the government in exchange for citizenship.

The second is that, on top of an outright donation to the government, you make an actual investment in property, financial instruments or businesses within a pre-screened and pre-selected set of investment opportunities.

These can range from a couple of hundred thousand dollars to several million dollars.

Citizenship by investment is certainly not for everyone, because of the steep price.

For a lot of people, it might make more sense to just acquire residency in a country and let time work for them until naturalisation.

But even if economic citizenship is right for you, we can only wholeheartedly recommend that you pursue citizenship by investment after you have checked whether you are eligible for citizenship by ancestry if you need a passport quickly.

However, if you find that citizenship by investment is the right choice for you, there are several options that offer passports of varying quality.

The Caribbean has five active citizenship by investment programs that will grant you and your family citizenship starting at $110,000 (for singles) and $150,000 (for a family of four).

Cyprus will require you to fork out over two million dollars for a passport, but Malta will give you citizenship for “just” $880,000 (that’s why we consider Malta the best value option out there if you are looking for a high-calibre European passport.)

If you’re a high-income earning US citizen who intends to move abroad and renounce your US citizenship, then an economic citizenship program might make economic sense for you. US citizens are the only people in the world (together with Eritreans) who have to pay taxes on their worldwide income no matter where they live in the world.

And if you’re a US citizen, simply eliminating your US tax burden alone could offset the costs of a new passport very quickly.

If you acquire citizenship and residency in a country with low or no tax, you could completely eliminate the taxes you pay – legally, and forever.

#4: Get a Second Passport Through Citizenship By Flexibility

If you don’t have the right ancestors, have no intention of moving abroad for many years and do not want to invest money in acquiring a second passport, there’s one more option for you.

If you’re willing to be flexible, you can acquire citizenship abroad in a number of different ways.

Get a second passport through Marriage
Most countries will loosen the requirements for citizenship if you marry a citizen of another country.

In most cases, you will still be required to live in the country you’re looking to get citizenship, but being married to a citizen of the country will usually make it a lot easier and quicker for you to become eligible.

(If your spouse can claim ancestry through bloodlines, it might be prudent to have him or her go through that process first and then help you acquire citizenship through marriage. Check with a qualified immigration attorney first, as this might not always be the most expedient or convenient option.)

Get a second passport by adopting a child or giving birth abroad
Another option is to either adopt a child or give birth to a child in a country that grants citizenship to everyone born on its territory – the so-called jus soli.

Some countries have fairly lenient requirements for residency, and eventually citizenship, for persons who are legal guardians of citizens of their country.

Brazil is a fantastic option.

Immediately after your newborn's birth, you, your spouse and your other children have the right to apply for a "residency of indefinite term," which grants you the right to stay, live and work within Brazil.

After securing residency, one year later you can apply for citizenship. You'll need to pass a Portuguese language test, and then wait for a few months for the Brazilian government to process your citizenship application.

So, within two years of having a baby in Brazil, your entire family could have second passports in hand.

And Brazil is also not the only country that gives citizenship by birth.

Get a second passport by changing your religion

Are you Jewish? Do you want to be? If so, you can get an Israeli passport.

In Israel, the "Law of Return" provides means for all Jews, and individuals of Jewish ancestry, to acquire Israeli residency and citizenship.

Israeli law defines Jewish ancestry as having at least one Jewish parent or grandparent.

In the event that you don't fit the ancestry definition, the law also provides the 'right of return' to all converted Jews of all denominations, and the conversion need not take place in Israel in order to qualify.

In either case, the onus is on the applicant to provide adequate documentation proving either Jewish ancestry or conversion to Judaism… the Israeli authorities won't just take your word for it. They will check.

How To Value A Passport And Citizenship

Not all passports are equal. That's why you should consider...

- The number of visa-free countries its holders can visit
- The complement effect
- Other Considerations & Factors

The “best” citizenship-by-investment option for you will depend on a number of subjective factors: your budget, if you’re OK with parting with a donation, or whether you’ll want an option that offers a possible return on your investment.

It also depends, of course, on how well you like the country itself.

However, we encourage you to consider two objective factors:

1. The number of countries holders of your new passport can visit, visa-free
For those who wish to renounce their original citizenship, this is the key factor to keep in mind.

For example, the US, Canada and many European countries provide visa-free travel for their citizens to more than 150 countries, making these passports the most valuable travel documents in the world.

(For reference, the world’s worst passports provide visa-free access to 60 countries or fewer.)

A passport from one of these countries includes visa-free access to most of the developed world and key parts of the developing world, including most of southeast Asia (for manufacturing and trade opportunities).

2. The “complement effect”
This is the number of countries you can visit visa-free with your new passport… that you couldn’t visit visa-free with your first one.

For those who intend to keep their original citizenship (and their passport), this second factor is the one to consider. When combining your two passports, you could unlock many more opportunities for business, work and travel.

For example, someone from the US would benefit from a European passport that gives them unfettered access to the European continent (except Russia).

This individual could reside in France, incorporate and run a business in low-tax Ireland, and enjoy passport-free travel to 26 countries (Europe’s Schengen Area).

But someone who already has a European passport would not benefit as much from a second European passport.

Take the example of Germany.

A German businessman or woman can travel freely to 162 nations. They can structure a manufacturing business in southeast Asia and visit as often as they'd like.
While they could benefit from diversifying internationally, a passport from a place like St. Kitts & Nevis is unlikely to unlock more business opportunities. (The German passport is one of the strongest in the world, so finding a better one would be difficult anywhere.)

Other Considerations & Factors
There are other variables to consider in selecting what passport program to go for.

The first one is a passport's reputation.
For example, some countries may not honour your citizenship if they don't believe it's legitimate. This is rare, but has happened in extreme circumstances.
With a top-tier passport from a place such as Malta, your chances of ever encountering this issue are rare.

The second is how well you blend in with your passport's culture.
Immigration officers are not immune to racism, and some may not trust your travel document if you personally look nothing like the people from your adopted country of citizenship.
This is more of an issue in some countries than others – no one will think twice about you being Brazilian, given Brazil's inherent ethnic mix.

The third consideration is taxes.
One great benefit of living or having citizenship abroad can be the ability to minimise your tax burden.

But, if you're not careful, you could become liable for more taxes. For example, some foreigners in the US are opting not to pursue American citizenship because it would subject them to taxation on their worldwide income for the rest of their lives.
Luckily, the US is the rare exception – in most other countries, citizenship comes with no additional tax obligations if you don't live there.

Finally, consider military service obligations that come with a new citizenship.
In some countries, all male citizens of a certain age are required to fulfill military service. The requirements may range from a few weeks of basic training to a few years of active duty.
However, just like with taxes, most countries will not make you go through with military service if you don't live there.

So, while these are certainly objective measures, valuing a passport and citizenship still comes down to your individual situation – are you looking to renounce your citizenship, or do you want to retain your citizenship and take advantage of your second passport?
This brings us to the next point: an overview of where to buy a passport, and which countries offer citizenship by investment… one of which may stand out as the right one for you and your family.

Second Passport Portfolio – No Limits

Just like an investor will create a portfolio of diverse investments to minimise risk and maximise return, a person with a passport portfolio will seek multiple citizenships.

You don't need to stop at two passports, provided that the countries that they are from allow for dual (or more) citizenship.

Perhaps one passport would open more travel opportunities for you. And the other one would allow you to make some pretty profitable investments.

Having a second passport portfolio could be the best thing that happened to you.
If you stick to the rules of what's legal and what's not, all your citizenships will be legitimately gained and used.

No one will even bat an eyelid.

As you might know, I'm a strong proponent of 'government arbitrage', it's great fun to pit governments against each other to compete over you.

This is an integral part of the Nomad Capitalist philosophy to go where you are treated best.

A passport portfolio will help you achieve just that, cherry picking the benefits you want from each of the countries you want passports for.

That said, you should also know that, as with everything, there are also risks associated with second passports and citizenships.

The 6 Important Factors To Consider When Picking The Best Second Passport

Here are six factors you should consider before picking a passport option...

1. The reputation of the country
2. How well you blend into the country's population
3. The country's tax system
4. The passport's visa-free travel options
5. Whether the country allows multiple citizenships
6. The obligations & requirements of being a citizen

It is important to make sure that the passport you acquire is completely legitimate and opens up as many doors for you and your family as possible.

At the same time, some passports come with obligations, and you need to make sure you are aware of those before you pursue naturalisation.

Below are a number of factors you should consider when deciding which passport is right for you.

1. The reputation of the country

The reputation of the country you choose can make all the difference in how you are treated by immigration officers and your home government.

It is possible for a government to choose not to honour your foreign citizenship if they do not believe it is legitimate. This is rare, but has happened in extreme circumstances.

Some countries, for example, are known specifically for selling passports. Travel documents from these countries are still useful to have, but they may face greater scrutiny.

If other countries decide to remove visa-free travel from and to that country, its value would also likely decrease in the future.

Generally speaking, Europe offers some of the best passports in the world. Luckily, it is also the continent with the most easily accessible citizenship by ancestry programs – so do make sure to check those out first.

2. How well you blend into the country's population

The legitimacy of your passport may also be influenced by how immigration officers deem you fit in with the local culture. These officers are not immune from racism, and thus may not trust your document if you look vastly different from the local population.

You can side-step this problem by choosing a country in which it's easier to blend in for you. This means picking a country in which the inhabitants ethnically look like you – or where you could easily blend in.

For example, pretty much anyone can look Brazilian. But if you carry a passport from the Caribbean and you are pale white with red hair, immigration officials might look at you twice before letting you pass.

3. The country's tax system
One great benefit of having residency abroad is the ability to potentially minimise your tax burden.

For example, US citizens living abroad can file for the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion, which allows you to exclude more than $100,000 of your income from your tax return.

Of course, you would still be subject to taxes in your new adopted country (if you move there). But if it's few or no taxes, you could essentially pay no taxes for the rest of your life. That's why some Americans choose to renounce their US citizenship. They live abroad, and even after qualifying for the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion, they are still left with hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay each year in US taxes.

Keep this in mind also if you wish to acquire US citizenship. The US is the only country in the world, together with Eritrea, that taxes its citizens no matter where they live in the world. So if you acquire US citizenship, you will be liable to pay American taxes – even if you live in Singapore, or Chile, for example.

Citizens from most other nationalities can benefit tremendously from acquiring citizenship from a lower-tax country. If they move there, they can permanently eliminate most if not all of the taxes they pay.

4. The passport's visa-free travel options
If you are looking to have easier travel access to the rest of the world, it makes sense for you to acquire a passport which complements the one you currently have, and adds more visa-free travel options.

For example, if you are a US citizen, it makes a lot of sense to acquire a European passport, which then gives you access to the entire European continent. You could live and work in the 27 EU countries.

Similarly, if you are from Europe, it makes sense to get a second passport from a country or region that allows you to access new opportunities away from home.

For example, an Argentinian passport will grant you access to not only Argentina, but also to all of the Mercosur trading bloc that makes it easy for Argentinians to obtain residency in neighbouring countries.

5. Whether the country allows multiple citizenships
Most countries allow their citizens to hold dual citizenship. Some, however, don't. Before you pursue citizenship abroad, you should check whether your home country allows you to obtain multiple citizenships.

If it doesn't, then simply obtaining residency abroad could do the trick for you. In that case, if something were to happen in your home country, you would have a place to go.

Of course, if the passport you are looking to obtain is significantly better than the one you currently have, you may consider renouncing your initial citizenship in favour of the new one. That is a highly personal decision, and one we don't advise you to take lightly. But with the right decision, you may open up a new world of opportunities to you and your families for generations to come.

6. The obligations & requirements of being a citizen
Some countries require their citizens to fulfil certain special obligations to retain their citizenship.

For example, some countries require all male citizens to do military service. Israel requires both males and females to serve.

The requirements may range from a few weeks to several years (like Singapore and Israel). These obligations will likely be imposed on your children too if they inherit the foreign citizenship. (Although if you don't live in the country of your second citizenship, you are generally off the hook.)

Therefore, we highly recommend you check if there are any special obligations (like military service) that you might need to fulfil upon becoming a citizen (or that your children might have to fulfil).

Then, you are free to consider whether these obligations still make it worthwhile for you to obtain the foreign citizenship.

Beware: Scams to Watch Out For

There are a lot of myths about second passports.

Unfortunately, the increasing desire for second passports has created a cottage industry of scammers and misinformation peddlers. There are several second passport scams to watch out for:

> **“Diplomatic passports”.** No, not even some banana republic is not going to make you part of their diplomatic corps. Diplomats are subject to certain standards around the world, and even countries with looser standards wouldn’t want to give away such a high honour in their country, and certainly not for $7,000.
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> **“Cancelled economic citizenship programs”.** While there are new countries starting to offer citizenship by investment programs, others no longer exist. For instance, Ireland once offered citizenship in exchange for investment in the country. While Ireland now offers residency and the potential for future naturalisation to those who invest in Irish businesses or government bonds, they don’t have an instant passport program.
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> Belize also used to have a program that no longer exists.
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> **“Camouflage passports”**. Camouflage passports were initially offered to Americans working in high-risk places. They are passports from countries that no longer exist, like British Honduras or Rhodesia. However, some scam websites claim you can become a citizen of a country that changed its name years ago, and never offered second passports.
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> **“Grey market passports”**. This is where someone bribes a guy in the immigration department to take some passports and put their clients’ names on them. Promoters will refer to their “special friend” at the immigration office. Sure, the passport itself is “real”, as much as a framed photograph of the Mona Lisa is “real”. Grey market passports may or may not be entered into the official system, and they may be cancelled if the government official taking bribes is found out, or if a future government decides to take action against “foreigners”.
>
> **“Black market passports”**. Black market passports are always illegal. They are the domain of scammers and are not legitimate in any way. They could be stolen or counterfeited. They could also be as simple as cutting someone else’s picture and information out and putting yours in.
>
> **“Banking passports”**. Some promoters offer “banking passports” which they advise you not to travel on; the idea is that immigration officials would discover their fraud and throw you, the passport holder, in jail, while a bank would not.

Using an illegitimate passport will cause you a world of trouble.

Not only are these scam passports difficult or impossible to renew, but you'd be silly to think you could get away with using a fraudulently issued passport forever.

Governments use linked systems to determine which passports are legitimate, and an illegitimate passport could be cancelled at any moment, leaving you in hot water the next time you cross a border.

Always go the official and legitimate route for obtaining citizenship. You stand everything to gain and nothing to lose.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.