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1. Citizenship is the status of being a citizen, along with the rights, duties and privileges of being a citizen. Citizenship can also be seen as the recognition of a person under the custom or law as being a legal member of a sovereign state or belonging to a nation. There are two main systems used to determine citizenship as of the time of birth: jus soli, whereby citizenship is acquired by birth within the territory of the state, regardless of parental citizenship and jus sanguinis, whereby a person, wherever born, is a citizen of the state if, at the time of his birth, his parent is one. The United States and the countries of the British Commonwealth adopt the jus soli as their basic principle; they also recognize acquisition of nationality by descent but subject it to strict limitations. Other countries generally adopt the jus sanguinis as their principle, supplementing it by provisions for acquisition of citizenship in case of combination of birth and domicile within the country, birth within the country of parents born there, and so on. There are various types of citizenship and there are different ways of acquiring citizenship in different countries.

In Nigeria, one can acquire citizenship through the following ways:

* Citizenship by birth
* Citizenship by registration
* Citizenship by naturalization
* Dual citizenship
* Honorary citizenship
* Citizenship by birth

The Constitution of Nigeria gives conditions for people to be regarded as citizens of the country by birth:

1. People who were born in Nigeria before and after the date of independence.
2. People whose parents, grandparents or other relatives belong to indigenous Nigerian communities.
3. If your parents or grandparents were or are citizens of Nigeria, you can be or become a citizen of Nigeria by birth; this applies even if you were born in another country.
4. Every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria.

A non-Nigerian e.g a Lebanese man/woman can be a citizen of Nigeria by birth if he or she meets any of the criteria above. Apart from citizenship by birth, there are other ways non-Nigerians can acquire Nigerian citizenship. For example, a Lebanese man. What happens in a case scenario where a Lebanese man/woman desires to acquire Nigerian citizenship but is not a citizen by birth? He/she can achieve his/her desire by acquiring Nigerian through other ways of acquiring citizenship. One of these ways is citizenship by registration.

Citizenship by Registration

Section 26 of the Nigerian Constitution explains that a non-Nigerian like the Lebanese man/woman can acquire citizenship of Nigeria by registration. The Lebanese man or woman has to apply for the citizenship of Nigeria. However, he has to meet some conditions:

1. The Lebanese man or woman has to be of good character (This has to be testified by two people and one of them should be a religious minister).
2. He or she expresses and shows a clear intention of his inclination/desire/wish to be domiciled in Nigeria.
3. The Lebanese man/woman has subscribed to the oath of allegiance to Nigeria, which is provided by the seventh schedule of the Nigerian Constitution.
4. He or she is or has been married to a citizen of Nigeria. It also includes every person who has parents or grandparents of any indigenous Nigerian tribe.

The Lebanese man or woman can also become a citizen by naturalization.

Citizenship by Naturalization

If the Lebanese man/woman cannot apply to become a citizen by birth or registration, he/she can still apply to become a naturalized citizen if they meet these requirements:

1. The Lebanese man or woman is of full age.
2. He or she is of good character.
3. He or she has shown clear desire to be domiciled in the country.
4. The governor of the state where the Lebanese applying for citizenship wants to reside has to confirm the desire of the community to assimilate this person.
5. He or she should be capable of contributing to the wellbeing of Nigeria and its citizens.
6. The Lebanese man or woman has lived in Nigeria for fifteen years preceding the application date.

Dual Citizenship

A person who is a citizen of Nigeria by birth can acquire the citizenship of another country. However, it is not an option for people who became citizens of Nigeria by naturalization or registration. So the Lebanese man/woman who wants to acquire the citizenship of Nigeria by registration or naturalization will have to renounce his/her other citizenships within 12 months. Nigerian nationality law allows dual nationality of people of Nigerian descent through birth or parentage. They are also allowed to hold public office in Nigeria. Some in Nigeria feel that dual nationality damages nationality unity of the country.

Honorary Citizenship

A Lebanese man/woman can become a citizen of Nigeria, if he or she is awarded Nigerian citizenship by the government due to recognized achievement or merit. Honorary citizenship is a status bestowed by a country on a foreigner whom it considers worthy or admirable of the distinction. An example of a person awarded honorary citizenship by Nigeria is President Emmanuel Macron of France.

How a Lebanese man/woman can retain Nigerian Citizenship

1. He/she is a citizen by birth.
2. He/she is full age (18 years and above)
3. He/she is a person of good character.
4. He/she has shown clear desire to be domicile in Nigeria.
5. He/she is appraised by the Governor of his/her state of residence or proposed residence.
6. He/she is capable of making useful contribution to the advancement, progress and well-being of Nigeria.
7. He/she has taken oath of allegiance to Nigeria.
8. He/she is married to a citizen of Nigeria.
9. He/she has resided in Nigeria for a period of 15 years.
10. He/she has renounced citizenships of other countries.
11. He/she is awarded honorary citizenship by Nigerian government.
12. He/she does not voluntary renounce citizenship of Nigeria.

How a Lebanese man/woman can lose Nigerian citizenship

A Lebanese man/woman can lose his newly acquired Nigerian citizenship if he/she:

1. within a period of seven years after becoming naturalized, been sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years.
2. voluntarily renounces his/her Nigerian citizenship.
3. voluntarily acquires citizenship of other countries after registration or naturalization, other than Nigeria, of which he or she is not a citizen by birth.
4. during proceedings in a court of law or other tribunals shows himself by act or speech to be disloyal towards to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
5. unlawfully traded with or assisted the enemy of Nigeria during any war in which Nigeria was engaged in or unlawfully communicated with such enemy to the detriment of or with intent to cause damage to the interest of Nigeria.
6. There are different theories on the evolution of states. One of them is social contract theory of state. In primeval times, according to the theory, the nature of state was anarchic. Employing reason, the people decided to form a society by means of contract among themselves.