



SPORT NATIONALITY CHANGES PROCEDURES

Sport nationality changes applications:

➤ **Who applies?**

The prospective NF must send an application letter to the FEI Secretary General. Please send to: Catherine Bollon, Legal Coordinator: catherine.bollon@fei.org

➤ **How to apply?**

The letter must:

- Indicate the reasons for the desired change
- Confirm the prospective NF's support
- Be accompanied by a copy of the athlete's valid passport (or equivalent document proving citizenship) + competition record for the last 2 years

➤ **When?**

At least 30 days prior to the first Event the Athlete wishes to compete for the new country if the change is approved.

(Please note: A competitor who has represented one country in the Olympic Games, in continental or regional games or in world or regional championships recognized by the relevant IF, and who has changed his nationality or acquired a new nationality, may participate in the Olympic Games to represent his new country provided that at least three years have passed since the competitor last represented his former country).

➤ **How it works**

Upon receipt of the prospective NF's application for a sport nationality change, the FEI will send an acknowledgement fax which lists, where applicable, any further documentation to be provided and informs the Athlete's current NF of the process initiated.

Once the relevant documents are submitted, the file is reviewed by the FEI Legal Department. If all applicable requirements are met (see below), the FEI will issue its approval. A change of sport nationality is complete and effective only if the FEI has issued its approval.

Requirements for approval of a change of sport nationality:

I. Adult Athletes:

Pursuant to art. 119 of the FEI General Regulations (see pages 3 and 4), a change of sport nationality is subject to the following cumulative requirements:

1 - the Athlete must hold the nationality of the country of the NF he wishes to represent at international level and he must have held this nationality on the 31 December of the previous year;

In addition, in order to be able to compete for his potential new NF at the events listed in art. 119.5 (FEI Championships, FEI World Cup Series, FEI Super League Series, FEI Nations Cup Series), the Athlete must show that :

2 - the Athlete has not been competing for his previous NF at those same types of events listed for two years (= "waiting period").

3 - the Athlete has had his residence in the country of his potential new NF for at least two consecutive years immediately prior to the moment he wishes to participate in such events or a total of five non-consecutive years.

Attenuations to the residency requirement set out in point 3 above:

- no residency requirement is imposed where the Athlete can establish one of the following:
 - (i) the Athlete's entitlement to his new nationality was established by his birth in that country;
 - (ii) The Athlete's entitlement to his new nationality was established by one of his biological parents being born in that country;
 - (iii) the naturalized Athlete was a former national whose loss of nationality was neither voluntary or due to criminal acts; or
 - (iv) the naturalized Athlete had to renounce his former nationality as a condition of acquiring a new one

- where the naturalized Athlete can establish that he is legally married to a national of the new country of nationality, the residency requirement set out in point 3 above shall be reduced to one (1) year of uninterrupted legal residence or three (3) years of non-consecutive periods of legal residence.

-

II. Minor Athletes (under 18 years of age):

1. Election of sport nationality: Minor Athletes who are citizens of more than one country can choose each calendar year which National Federation they want to represent and should be registered with the FEI accordingly.

Minor Athletes may subsequently change their NF (only once per calendar year). Such change of NF is subject to the previous NF's, the new NF's and the FEI's approvals if the Minor Athlete has already participated in an international event for another NF since 1 January of that year.

2. Host-NF representation: Minor athletes residing in a Foreign country of which they do not hold citizenship: Athletes under 18 years of age may compete for their country of residence in the following events and regardless of the country where the event is organized: CIs for Pony Riders, Junior Riders and Young Riders (which excludes CIOs and Championships), and senior CIMs as defined in Appendix E, GRs. The Athlete must inform his "own NF" (NF of his country of nationality) of his participation in competitions representing his "host-NF" (NF of the country of residence).

3. Host-NF representation as of 18: A Minor Athlete who has always competed for his country of residence and not his own NF, may apply to the FEI to establish his country of residence as his own NF once he turns 18, even though he is not a national of such country, subject to the provisions of paragraph 6.3, art. 119 GRs.

SPORT NATIONALITY RULES

Article 119- Sport Nationality Status of Athletes

1. General principles:

1.1 The NF of a country where an Athlete has his nationality is his "own" NF. Proof of nationality is necessary for an Athlete to compete for a country.

1.2 Except as provided in paragraphs 4, 5, 6.2, and 6.3, an Athlete may only compete, at International Events, for his "own NF", as defined in paragraph 1.1.

2. Sport nationality and sport nationality changes: Adult Athletes

2.1 An Athlete who is a national of more than one (1) country must decide as of the age of (eighteen) 18 years which of his countries of nationality will be his own NF for international competition purposes. Thereafter, subject to paragraph 2.2.1, he can only represent that NF in international competition. Further changes to his sport nationality can only be accomplished through a sport nationality change process, subject to the conditions outlined in this paragraph 2.

2.2 Sport nationality changes:

2.2.1 Basic requirement: an Adult Athlete who becomes the national of more than one (1) country and wishes to compete for his new country of nationality may apply for a sport nationality change to the FEI, provided he has acquired his new nationality by 31st December of the preceding year.

2.2.2 Additional requirements prior to participation in FEI Championships, FEI World Cup™ Series, FEI Super League Series, and FEI Nations Cup Series:

(i) Subject to the exceptions set forth in paragraph 2.2.3 below, the Athlete must have had legal residence in his new country prior to the first competition he wishes to compete in under his new sport nationality, for *either*: (a) a minimum of two (2) uninterrupted years ; *or* (b) a total of five (5) years of non-consecutive periods.

(ii) The Athlete shall not have taken part in any of the competitions set forth in Article 2.2.2. above for his previous NF in the two (2) years prior to the first competition he wishes to compete in under his new sport nationality.

2.2.3 The residency requirement set out in paragraph 2.2.2 (i) shall be mandatory, except where the Athlete can establish one of the following:

(i) the Athlete's entitlement to his new nationality was established by his birth in that country;

(ii) The Athlete's entitlement to his new nationality was established by one of his biological parents being born in that country;

(iii) the naturalized Athlete was a former national whose loss of nationality was neither voluntary or due to criminal acts; or

(iv) the naturalized Athlete had to renounce his former nationality as a condition of acquiring a new one

2.2.4 Where the naturalized Athlete can establish that he is legally married to a national of the new country of nationality, the residency requirement set out in paragraph 2.2.2 (i) shall be reduced to one (1) year of uninterrupted legal residence or three (3) years of non-consecutive periods of legal residence.

2.2.5 An application for an Athlete's change of sport nationality must be filed with the FEI Secretary General, through his new NF, stating the reason for the change and supported by the Athlete's passport or equivalent document for the new country that he wishes to represent. The FEI must inform the current NF that a request for change of sport nationality has been filed.

2.2.6 An Athlete shall only be entitled to compete for his new NF once the FEI has given its written approval of the change in sport nationality.

2.2.7 In special and exceptional circumstances, the FEI has the discretion to grant exceptions, with the agreement of the NFs concerned.

2.2.8 Participation in the Olympic and Paralympic Games is also subject to Olympic and Paralympic Regulations (Bye-law to Rule 42, Olympic Charter).

3. Sport nationality and sport nationality changes: Minor Athletes

3.1 A Minor Athlete who is a citizen of more than one country can choose each calendar year which NF he wants to represent.

3.2 A Minor Athlete may subsequently change his NF (only once per calendar year). Such change of NF is subject to the previous NF's, the new NF's and the FEI's approvals if the Minor Athlete has already participated in an international event for another NF since 1 January of that calendar year.

3.3 As of the Minor Athlete's 18th birthday, paragraph 2 above applies. At such time, the Athlete will register with the chosen NF who will, in turn, register the Athlete with the FEI.

4. If an associate state, province or overseas department, a country or a colony acquires independence; if a country becomes incorporated within another country by reason of a change of border; or if a new NF is recognized by the FEI, an Athlete may continue to represent the country to which he belongs or belonged if that country continues to have an NOC. However, he may, if he prefers, choose to represent his new NF. This particular choice must receive the Approval of the FEI and may be made only once.

5. An Athlete Living outside his country of nationality who: (i) loses his nationality; (ii) becomes a refugee; or (iii) whose home country does not have an NF which is a member of the FEI, can compete internationally as if he were a national of the host country in all International Events including Championships, until such time as his home country has an NF which is a member of the FEI.

6. Athletes Living outside their country of nationality:

6.1 An Adult Athlete Living outside his country of nationality can have his entries processed by his "host-NF" for participation in CNs, CIMs as well as CIs if he is given permission of his own NF and the FEI. The Athlete, while keeping his own NF, comes under the jurisdiction of the host NF for the above-mentioned Events and must take part according to the relevant Sport Rules. This administrative facility is not a change of sport nationality. The Athlete will in all circumstances keep his "own NF", and always compete under its flag.

6.2 A Minor Athlete may compete for his country of residence in the following Events, and regardless of the country where the Event is organized: CIs for Pony Riders, Junior Riders and Young Riders (which excludes CIOs and Championships), and senior CIMs as defined in Appendix E, GRs. In such circumstances, the Athlete will be compelled to inform his "own NF" as well as the FEI.

6.3 A Minor Athlete who has always competed for his country of residence and not his own NF, may apply to the FEI to establish his country of residence as his own NF once he turns 18, even though he is not a national of such country, only if: (i) he has never competed under the flag of his own NF; (ii) the country of residence, in the FEI's opinion, qualifies as a country where obtaining nationality is overly burdensome; (iii) the Minor Athlete has a valid identity card or residence permit for the country of residence, or other equivalent document; and (iii) the Minor Athlete has been a resident of the country of residence for at least the last five (5) consecutive years. The FEI shall have sole discretion to grant or deny an application presented under this provision, weighing the best interests of equestrian sport against the best interests of the Minor Athlete.