The Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration and the Minister of State for Migration secured government approval for the priority drafting of legislation that will amend Ireland's naturalisation legislation, aligning it with that of other European countries.

The General Scheme of the Bill includes proposals to:

- Increase the qualifying periods of reckonable residence from 5 to 8 years for most applicants;
- Introduce language tests in English, Irish or Irish Sign Language, and an Irish civics, society and politics test; and
- Ensure applicants for citizenship by naturalisation are self-sufficient.

The General Scheme, published on the website of the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, will be referred to the Joint Committee on Justice for pre-legislative scrutiny.

The bill is set to align practices with other European countries, given several of them impose residence periods of 7 to 10 years, including Austria, Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland. Economic self-sufficiency is a standard pillar of citizenship policy across other EU Member States and many countries require applicants to demonstrate stable income; means of subsistence; tax compliance and an absence of reliance on social assistance are envisaged in Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary and Poland. Most European countries also require some form of language proficiency for naturalisation while the majority of EU Member States require applicants to demonstrate proficiency in the national language as part of the citizenship process. Finally, civic integration testing is also common across Europe and many European countries require applicants to pass a civic integration or citizenship test covering knowledge of the state, society, rights, institutions, history or culture.

Source(s)

- Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration | An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, Gnóthaí Baile agus Imirce (9 September, 2026), [Government approval secured for the priority drafting of the Irish Nationality and Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2026], https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/press-releases/government-approval-secured-for-the-priority-drafting-of-the-irish-nationality-and-citizenship-amendment-bill-2026/

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Date of development
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Country
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