

Petition to Allow Multiple Citizenships

Document No. 2013 – 1

Petitioner: Fukukokuseki (Multiple Citizenships) PT

Petition items:

1. Prompt Repeal of the Requirement that Japanese Citizens Holding Multiple Nationalities Make a Nationality Selection to Renounce either their Japanese Nationality or their Foreign Citizenship(s), which Has Been Ineffective.
2. Reciprocal Approval of Multiple Citizenships for Japanese Nationals with Other Nations that Allow Multiple Citizenships.
Example: Nations in Oceania, America, and Europe.

Our View of this Petition:

Doubtless, allowing multiple citizenships would promote various opportunities for Japanese citizens around the world. It would greatly benefit Japanese people living abroad as well as their families. Now that Japanese communities are spread over the world, allowing multiple citizenships would benefit them, which would also be of great benefit to Japan. In particular, this revision of the law would contribute to securing international human capital and information resources as well as economic and financial assets.

At present, the Japanese nationality law of 1950 is among the most intolerant of multiple citizenships compared with the laws of other developed countries. On the other hand, an increasing number of Japanese citizens study and work around the world. Reforming this intolerant system to make it more lenient would be consistent with the world trend, because other developed countries also allow multiple citizenships. Finally, it would significantly promote Japanese interests and contribute to Japan as a whole. Moreover, allowing multiple citizenships with other reliable developed nations would help internationalization but would not cause social problems.

There are some criticisms about allowing multiple citizenships, such as concerns about conflict of loyalty or conflict with the right of diplomatic protection. On the other hand, more countries have shifted from sole citizenship systems to multiple citizenships systems, as evidenced by the Republic of Korea among other Asian countries. It is now becoming a world trend. It can be said that there is no other country as intolerant as Japan among developed nations. A seclusion policy could harm the Japanese economy, which has already been in recession. Moreover, the disadvantages of allowing multiple citizenships pointed out by the Ministry of Justice have never arisen as social issues among countries that allow such a system. For example, problems have never been observed in the Republic of Korea.

It is estimated that at least 600,000 Japanese people hold multiple citizenships. This clearly shows that the intolerant current system has become an obsolete framework. The trend for more Japanese to go overseas has inexorably increased this number and will continue in future. However, we have never observed related social issues. It is time to revise the intolerant system. The Japan Federation of Bar Associations has also recommended that it be changed to a more tolerant system of allowing multiple citizenships.

Therefore, we request the following two amendments to the current law.

1. Prompt Repeal of the Nationality Selection System, which has been ineffective.

Children who are born to a Japanese parent and a parent with foreign nationality or those who are born to Japanese parents in Jus Soli states such as the United States of America should have dual citizenship. This would allow Japanese citizenship plus that of the other parent in the former case or the nation where the child is born in the latter case. The Japanese-Nationality Law requires any person who holds multiple citizenships to make a "declaration of choice" by the age of twenty-two, whereby they choose to renounce either their Japanese nationality or their foreign citizenship(s). However, this could be regarded as requiring children to choose one of their parents and we find this quite an unreasonable demand. As evidence for our position, we note the Japan Federation of Bar Associations has pointed out that this requirement could violate the human rights of those children. Moreover, it is estimated that 30,000 to 40,000 Japanese people a year are born holding other citizenships, whereas only 10% of those Japanese people have made a nationality selection. This shows that this system itself has become ineffective.

2. Reciprocal Approval for Japanese Citizens to Hold Citizenships of Other Nations that Allow Multiple Citizenships for their Citizens

Japan should allow citizens to hold multiple citizenships with countries that have normalized relationships with Japan and allow multiple citizenships for their citizens, such as France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States of America, and Oceania countries such as Australia and so on.

複国籍の容認に関する請願（１．形骸化した国籍選択制度の早急な廃止。２．複国籍を容認している一方の国、例えばオセアニア、欧米諸国等との相互主義的な複数国籍の容認。）【文書 2013-1（複国籍 PT）】に賛同し、署名いたします。（住所[国外の場合国名も記入]、氏名はローマ字表記可。その場合ゴシック体でお願いします。筆記体は不可。氏名はなるべく日本語表記でお願いします。自筆の記名に押印の必要はありません。自筆以外の記名には本人の押印をお願い致します。）

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