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## About the information in this report

All information present in this report is taken from legal text and official sources. The research for this report was undertaken from the month of August 2016 until October 2016.

## Foreword

This report is aimed at immigration lawyers looking to facilitate second citizenship or residence for clients carrying heavy past criminal sentences. All the options put forward are strictly legal.

We have listed all the possible second citizenship options in the world for individuals carrying heavy past criminal sentences. All these options use citizenship “by exceptional contribution” clauses that many countries possess in their Nationality laws. The two-dozen countries we have listed do not require the applicant to show a police record or report past crimes. Furthermore, these two-dozen countries only comprise those in the sphere of possibility.

We view the options in regard to legal residence in countries that do not require the applicant to show a police report or to report past crimes. We have researched dozens of countries and their residence programs in order to create this report. Unlike citizenship, residence is a straightforward process.

We have also listed all the passports enabling unlimited stay or one-year residency in certain countries.

## Introduction

### Citizenship

First and foremost, it is important to understand that this report does not state that any of the countries we have compiled will give you citizenship even if you apply under the legal grounds we put forward. We simply explain the legal grounds on which you can apply for citizenship by exception without having previously resided in the country and having a criminal record. We cannot state as a fact that any of them will grant you citizenship.

To be clear, every country in the world asks for a police record or requires the individual to announce his previous criminal sentences during a normal naturalization process. No country will naturalize you in a regular proceeding without wanting to know your criminal history. Some countries are more lenient than others; some might even accept small prison sentences or require a certain amount time to have gone by since the criminal activity.

Basically, there are no traditional legal ways into second citizenship for individuals with heavy past sentences. But there are ways to become resident and exceptional ways to get naturalized in a few dozen countries.

To understand why many countries would allow a foreigner to be given citizenship even if he previously committed serious crimes, you need to go back to times when those countries were fighting civil wars or for their independence. Many of the exceptional measures we list apply to those who rendered exceptional services to the country or the side they were fighting for. To put this in a simple context, during WWII, resistance movements would fight the occupation, and many of them could end up in jail for various crimes. Some of them were foreigners that helped and supported the cause of the resistance movement. After the end of the occupation, many of those foreigners were celebrated as heroes of the resistance and those laws were put in place for them to obtain citizenship because they provided exceptional service to the nation. Today those definitions have widened and provide for past, present or future contributions.

Those dispositions are present in many countries; even France has them, meaning it is technically possible for a foreigner that was sentenced for serious crimes abroad to be naturalized because of their exceptional contribution or special interest to the nation. But this is not a path that a sensible person would want to take to become a French citizen.

In this report, we try to stay in the realm of the possible and even then there is no established route towards any of those second citizenships. The dispositions are in the law, but there are not regulations for them, so they are left open to interpretation: what is an exceptional contribution? What is a special interest? They could tell you one day that a \$250K donation to an orphanage is enough, and another asks for \$10 million in investment in the country. Government changes and minister changes are all factors that can affect this; you never know what you are going to get. As well, it is important to find the right representation on the ground. Some law firms hold strong ties with the government and have better access to assessing what would be considered an exceptional contribution. It is usually more prudent to pursue more than one option, hoping that at least one pays off. You might have to be willing to go for more than one additional nationality.

The list of countries we have gathered are credible options for second citizenship, some more than others. None are high in Quality of Life indexes, but some of them are reasonable places to live. Be aware that although all of them can technically be obtained even if you had a severe criminal conviction in the past, most of them can be lost if you keep breaking the law. Most countries on our list will deprive you of your citizenship if they come to know of present crimes. Of course, they might never find out until they get an extradition request or through diplomatic ties, and perhaps no one back home knows of your second citizenship. The legal process of taking away your citizenship might even take time, but some countries might decide to dump you without using the legal process or have the right to deprive you without contestation. Our most highly rated countries are those that can't deprive you of your citizenship.

Any naturalization that requires approval from numerous individuals becomes harder. Those that require approval from a National Assembly or Senate are not the options one should necessarily go after. Many normal naturalizations are formally given by the president or minister, but they don't look at all, if any, of the applications. How many of the exceptional naturalizations require the real approval of the president or minister? Nevertheless, the higher up the approval comes from, the harder it is to get. It is a better option to go with a country whose government or ministry delivers those approvals.

## Residence

Some countries don't require you to provide a police record when applying for residence, only requiring that you declare your infractions. In these cases, many can be tempted to lie. Most of the time the country will not check if it is true, but living and purchasing assets in a country where you are not in a stable legal stay is risky. What if they find out and ship you out after a few years? What will happen to your assets? There is actually not much difference in consequences when it comes to omitting a crime on a declaration and blatantly falsifying a police record.

We have compiled a list of the most livable places you could reside without having to submit a police record. All of these are temporary residencies that, in most case, need to be renewed annually.

## Unlimited Stay & Freedom of Movement

The possibility exists that your current passport enables you to reside for a full year or an unlimited amount of time in another country without applying for residence. This list is not exhaustive and a straightforward example is the Schengen Zone, which allows freedom of movement.

You are not required to show a police record when travelling to any of those countries listed below and in the case of unlimited stay, it can be much better than applying for residence.

In the case of a one-year stay, you will normally need to exit the country before being allowed to stay another year.

There are a number of countries that enable you to extend your visa every month until you reach one year. We do not discuss those countries in this report.

Be aware that unlimited stay doesn't necessarily mean you can buy property and work without registering with local authorities. Unlimited stay usually means that you can enter the country and live like a tourist for an undetermined amount of time without having to deal with the local government.