



CYPRUS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

on the basis of subsection (2) of section 111A of the Civil Registry Laws

One of the main objectives of the economic policy of the Republic of Cyprus is to further encourage foreign direct investment and to attract high net worth individuals to settle and conduct their business in Cyprus. Key factors that make Cyprus an attractive destination for investment, is the highly specialized human capital, the reliable legislative and regulatory framework, the stable tax system and the safety and stability conditions prevailing in the country.

Within this framework and taking into account the strong investor interest, the Government of Cyprus has established and revised the "Cyprus Investment Programme" on the basis of subsection (2) of section 111A of the Civil Registry Laws of 2002-2019, with specific incentives, terms and conditions and control procedures in order to prevent abuse.

On the basis of the Programme, a non-Cypriot citizen may apply for the acquisition of the Cypriot citizenship through naturalization by exception, if he/she fulfils the financial criterion A.1 and one of the financial criteria A.2-A.5, either personally or through a company/ companies in which he/she participates as a shareholder – in proportion to his/her holding percentage, or through investments done by his/her spouse or jointly with the spouse or even as a high-ranking senior manager of a company/ companies that fulfils the financial criterion A.1 and one of the financial criteria A.2-A.5,.

Moreover, a high-ranking senior manager may apply, provided that he/she receives such a remuneration that generates for the Republic tax revenues of at least €100,000 over a three-year period and provided that this tax has already been paid or prepaid.

The applicant should have made the necessary investments during the three years preceding the date of the application and must retain the said investments for a period of at least five years as from the date of the naturalization. It is understood that the investor may replace the investment during the said five-year period, provided that he/she has obtained beforehand an approval by the Ministry of Finance.

In addition, the applicant must fulfil the Terms and Conditions set out in Part B.

In case where, following a periodic inspection, it has been established that a Criterion, Term or Condition of the Programme has been breached, the granted naturalization may be revoked.

None of the clauses mentioned in the Programme affects the absolute discretion of the Cabinet of Ministers on making a decision.

A. FINANCIAL CRITERIA

A.1 Donation to the Research and Innovation Foundation and the Cyprus Land Development Corporation:

(a) The applicant must have donated at least €75.000 to the Research and Innovation Foundation. It is noted that if the applicant wishes to donate an amount higher than the minimum of €75.000, this additional amount can be used for purposes of supplementing the total amount of the investment made on the basis of the criteria A.2-A.5.

Furthermore, the aforementioned obligation is lifted, if the applicant has invested at least €75.000 in a certified innovative enterprise (i.e. an enterprise that had acquired the relevant certificate by the Ministry of Finance) or a certified social enterprise.

In addition, the obligation is lifted, if the applicant has made an investment under the criterion A.3 (Purchase or Establishment or Participation in Cypriot Companies or Businesses) of a total amount equal to the 20% of the required investment amount (i.e. €400.000) of the abovementioned criterion A.3 in a company whose operations fall within the primary sector of the economy, or the secondary sector of the economy (excluding constructions), or in the sectors of research and development, education, health and renewable energy sources.

(b) The applicant must have donated at least €75.000 to the Cyprus Land Development Corporation for the financing of housing schemes for affordable housing, but also for the materialization of other housing schemes/measures. It is noted that if the applicant wishes to donate an amount higher than the minimum of €75.000, this additional amount can be used for purposes of supplementing the total amount of the investment made on the basis of the criteria A.2-A.5.

A.2 Investment in real estate, land development and infrastructure projects:

The applicant must have made an investment of at least €2,0 million for the purchase or construction of buildings or for the construction of other land development projects (residential or commercial developments, developments in the tourism sector) or other infrastructure projects.

It is noted that investment in land under development is included in this criterion, provided that an investment plan for the development of the purchased land will be included in the application. It is understood that investment in land that is situated in a building zone of zero development, is excluded.

A.3 Purchase or Establishment or Participation in Cypriot Companies or Businesses:

The applicant must have invested at least €2,0 million for the purchase or participation in companies or organizations established and operating in the Republic of Cyprus with investment costs of. The invested funds shall be channeled towards the financing of the investment objectives of these companies exclusively in Cyprus, based on a specific investment plan. Moreover, investments in the shipping sector are eligible on the basis of measurable criteria that will be determined jointly by the Ministry of Finance and the Shipping Deputy Ministry.

The applications shall be evaluated to verify that the companies or organizations have proven physical presence in Cyprus, with significant activity and turnover and employ at least 5 (five) Cypriot citizens or citizens of European Union member-states. The minimum number of employees shall increase, if more than one applicant invest simultaneously or almost simultaneously in the same business or company.

A.4 Investment in Alternative Investment Funds or Registered Alternative Investment Funds or financial assets of Cypriot companies or Cypriot organizations that are licensed by Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission :

The applicant should have bought units of at least €2,0 million from alternative investment funds (AIF) or Registered Alternative Investment Funds (RAIF) established in the Republic of Cyprus, licensed/registered and supervised by the Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (CySec) and whose investments are made exclusively in the Republic of Cyprus, in investments that meet the criteria of this Programme or in areas approved by the Minister of Finance. It is permitted for these AIFs or RAIFs to invest in secondary market stock-market values of the Cyprus Stock Exchange an amount that does not exceed the €200.000.

In order to confirm that the investments that meet the criteria of the current Programme will be retained for at least 5 (five) years, the manager or the auditor of the Fund shall inform in writing and on an annual basis, the Ministry of Finance with reference to the value of the initial investment.

The purchase of financial assets of Cypriot companies or organizations of at least €2,0 million, such as bonds, bills and securities, issued with the approval of the CySec, by companies that have proven physical presence and substantial economic activity in the Republic of Cyprus, and have as a purpose the financing of the investment plans of these companies or organizations exclusively in Cyprus, based on an investment plan, fall under this criterion. It is noted that the purchase by an AIF or RAIF of units of other AIFs or RAIFs is not considered eligible.

A.5 Combination of the aforementioned investments:

The applicant may proceed with a combination of the above investments, provided that the total investment will amount up to at least €2,0 million.

B. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Clean Criminal Record: the applicant must have a clean criminal record. Furthermore, his/her name must not be included in the list of persons whose assets, within the boundaries of the European Union, have been frozen as the result of sanctions.

Moreover, an applicant whose application for citizenship in any other member-state of the European Union had been rejected, is not eligible to apply for the acquisition of the Cypriot citizenship through the Cyprus Investment Programme.

2. Schengen Visa: The applicant must hold a valid Schengen visa. Third-Country nationals that do not require an entry visa for travelling in European Union member-states, as well as citizens of European Union Member States are excluded from this obligation.

It is noted that all the aforementioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 also apply for the family members of the investor that are eligible to apply for the acquisition of Cypriot citizenship.

3. Residence in the Republic of Cyprus: In all cases listed in Part A, the applicant must possess a permanent privately-owned residence in the Republic of Cyprus, the purchase price of which must be at least €500.000, plus V.A.T.

It is noted that members of the same family, who apply separately as investors, can collectively acquire a residence, provided that the total value of this home-property covers the amount of €500.000 per each applicant.

In case that the purchase value of the permanent privately owned residence in Cyprus exceeds the amount of €500,000, this additional amount can be used for purposes of supplementing the total amount of the investment made on the basis of the criteria of Part A above.

Additionally, it is noted that if the applicant has invested in housing unit/units on the basis of the aforementioned criterion A.2, the purchase of another permanent residence in Cyprus will not be required, if at least one of these housing units is worth at least €500,000, plus VAT, provided that the applicant retains the possession of the residence for life.

However, if the applicant has invested in housing units that have already being used for the purpose of acquiring the Cypriot citizenship via the Programme, the above provision will be in force provided that the total amount of the investments, including the privately-owned residence, is at least €2,5 million.

4. Residence Permit in Cyprus: The applicant, prior to his/her naturalization as a Cypriot citizen must hold a residence permit in Cyprus for a period of at least 6 (six) months.

If the applicant does not already hold a residence permit, he/she may apply for an immigration permit on the basis of Regulation 6(2) of the Aliens and Immigration Law, simultaneously with the application for naturalization. The applicant, prior to his/her naturalization as a Cypriot citizen must hold a residence permit in Cyprus for a period of at least 6 (six) months.

If the application for acquiring an immigration permit is made solely for purposes of acquiring the Cypriot citizenship, in accordance with the provisions of this Programme, there are no other conditions than those stated in both Part A and Part B of this Programme.

It is noted that all of the above also apply for the adult members of the family of the investor, who will apply for naturalization.

In case the application for naturalization is rejected for any reason, the immigration permit, obtained in accordance with the provisions of this decision, will be canceled immediately.

C. SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS

For the evaluation of the applications the form (M127) as well as the following documents must be submitted:

1. Clean Criminal Record:

(a) Certificate of Clean Criminal Record from the country of origin and the country of residence (if different).

(b) Due Diligence Report issued through an internationally accepted database ensured through a subscription (e.g. Wolrd Check, LexisNexis Diligence, Regulatory DataCorp Inc. etc.). The report must be dated no later than thirty days from the date of its submission.

(c) Declaration by the applicant concerning any citizenship applications he/she may have submitted in any other member-state or member-states of the European Union.

2. Schengen Visa:

Copy of a valid Schengen Visa

3. Residence in the Republic of Cyprus:

- (a) Contract of Sale.
- (b) Title Deeds or Proof of Registration of the contract with the Lands and Surveys Department.
- (c) Proof of payment of the agreed purchase price.
- (d) Copy of the wire transfer to a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the seller or the seller's company.
- (e) An evaluation certificate from an independent registered land surveyor, if required by the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Finance.
- (f) Town-planning permit, provided that it is required by the Town and Country Planning Law.
- (g) Declaration by the mortgage lender in the benefit of whom the purchased property or properties is mortgaged that will waive the mortgage, provided that the investor or the seller will pay the lender the amount conscribed in the declaration (bank waiver).
- (h) Project completion certificate signed by the architect of the project. If the purchased property is under construction it is required either to maintain an amount equal to the 5% of the purchase value in a special account or for the seller to issue in the benefit of the purchaser a performance bank guarantee equal to the 5% of the purchase value.

3. Criteria regarding the investment (when applicable):

- (a) Certificate of Registration of the company/ companies by the Registrar of Companies.
- (b) Certificate of shareholders by the Registrar of Companies or certificates evidencing that the applicant is the beneficiary owner of the company/ companies.
- (c) Audited accounts of the company (or companies) for the last three years preceding the year of the application.
- (d) If the applicant is a high-ranking senior manager, the submission of the employment contract and the receipt from the Department of Inland Revenue are additionally required.
- (e) If the investment is made by the spouse of the applicant or jointly, a marriage certificate is required.

Furthermore, depending on the case, the following are required:

1. Donation to the Research and Innovation Foundation and the Cyprus Land Development Corporation

- (a) Copy of the wire transfer of the donation to the Research and Innovation Foundation to an account in a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the Foundation.
- (b) Copy of the wire transfer of the donation to the Cyprus Land Development Corporation to an account in a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the Corporation.
- (c) Innovative enterprise certificate.
- (d) Investment Agreement in Cypriot company or companies.
- (e) Proof of payment of the agreed amount.
- (f) Certificate of shareholders by the Registrar of Companies.
- (g) Copy of the wire transfer to a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the company or the organization.
- (h) Specific investment plan.
- (i) Copies of the employment contracts of the Cypriot or European Union citizens employed by the company in which the applicant has invested.
- (j) Confirmation from the Social Insurance Department as to the insurable income of the Cypriot or European Union citizens employed in the company.
- (k) Registration Certificate (MEU1) or Permanent Registration Certificate of Union Citizen (MEU3) for employees that are European Union citizens.

2. Investment in real estate, land development and infrastructure projects

- (a) Contract of sale.
- (b) Title Deeds or Proof of Registration of the contract with the Lands and Surveys Department. (c) Proofs of payment of the agreed purchase price.
- (d) Copy of the wire transfer to a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the seller or the seller's company.
- (e) An evaluation certificate from an independent registered land surveyor, if required by the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Finance.
- (f) Investment Plan for the development of the purchased land, if the investment involves the purchase of land under development.
- (g) Town-planning permit, provided that it is required by the Town and Country Planning Law.

(h) Declaration by the mortgage lender in the benefit of whom the purchased property or properties is mortgaged that will waive the mortgage, provided that the investor or the seller will pay the lender the amount conscribed in the declaration (bank waiver).

(i) Project completion certificate signed by the architect of the project. If the purchased property is under construction it is required either to maintain an amount equal to the 5% of the purchase value in a special account or for the seller to issue in the benefit of the purchaser a performance bank guarantee equal to the 5% of the purchase value.

3. Purchase or Establishment or Participation in Cypriot Companies or Businesses

(a) Investment Agreement in Cypriot company or companies.

(b) Proof of payment of the agreed amount.

(c) Certificate of shareholders by the Registrar of Companies.

(d) Copy of the wire transfer to a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the company or the organization.

(e) Specific investment plan.

(f) Copies of the employment contracts of the Cypriot or European Union citizens employed by the company in which the applicant has invested.

(g) Confirmation from the Social Insurance Department as to the insurable income of the Cypriot or European Union citizens employed in the company.

(h) Registration Certificate (MEU1) or Permanent Registration Certificate of Union Citizen (MEU3) for employees that are European Union citizens.

4. Investment in Alternative Investment Funds or Registered Alternative Investment Funds or financial assets of Cypriot companies or Cypriot organizations that are licensed by Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission:

(a) Title/Titles and other relevant documents of the financial assets / units purchased.

(b) Copy of the wire transfer to a Cypriot commercial banking institution in the name of the company or the organization.

(c) Specific investment plan.

(d) Confirmation by the CySec.



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Cyprus: An International Business Center

Cyprus is ideally suited for international business due to the many benefits it has to offer. Its geographic location and excellent commercial infrastructure coupled with numerous tax incentives are among the factors, that have assisted Cyprus towards becoming an important International Business Center.

The island's 42 double tax treaties offer ample opportunities for international tax planning to legitimately reduce the overall tax burden for businesses and their shareholders. Cyprus has double tax treaties in force with the following countries:

Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malta, Mauritius, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Syria, Tadjikistan, Thailand, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States of America.

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