

Immigrant Invest explains how Malta citizenship by merit works

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LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, March 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In 2025, Malta's citizenship policy has shifted. The government abolished its citizenship for exceptional service by direct investment option. Instead, a new framework built on achievement and national interest was introduced.

As high-net-worth individuals seek stable and reputable routes to second citizenship, Malta's merit-based

naturalisation has attracted increasing attention. The system is structured around merit and genuine integration rather than fixed financial thresholds.



Malta citizenship by merit

Immigrant Invest explains how [Malta citizenship by merit](#) works and what applicants should consider before proceeding.

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Legal foundation and core principle

Malta grants citizenship by merit under the Maltese Citizenship Act. The law allows the authorities to approve applications on a discretionary basis when an individual provides measurable benefit to Malta or to humanity. There is no automatic right to citizenship and no guaranteed outcome. Each case is examined individually.

The concept of ‘merit’ refers to achievements or commitments that create tangible, lasting value. This may include launching innovative businesses, advancing research, strengthening key industries, supporting culture, or developing structured philanthropic initiatives. Authorities assess both proven results and the credibility of future plans.

A genuine connection with Malta is essential. Applicants must demonstrate real engagement with the country through holding residence, professional activity, partnerships, or community involvement. Citizenship by merit reflects integration and contribution rather than passive investment.

'Malta's merit-based framework demonstrates Europe's shift towards contribution-driven naturalisation,' says Julia Loko, [investment programmes expert at Immigrant Invest](#). 'Authorities now focus on measurable impact and long-term engagement, which makes alignment with national priorities essential for high-net-worth applicants.'

Eligibility requirements

Applicants must first meet strict integrity standards. Malta applies multi-layered Due Diligence, including verification of criminal records, sanctions screening, and source-of-wealth analysis. Background transparency and a strong reputation are fundamental conditions.

The core of the application is proof of exceptional contribution. Entrepreneurs may present projects that create jobs or introduce advanced technologies to Malta, such as launching a digital company that hires local professionals and works with Maltese institutions.

Researchers can provide patents, publications, or partnerships with Maltese universities and research centres. Philanthropists may outline long-term support for healthcare, education, or social initiatives aligned with national priorities. The focus is on sustainable impact rather than one-off donations.

Residence is another key element. Applicants must obtain and hold a valid residence permit in Malta for at least 8—12 months. During this period, they establish practical ties, such as leasing or purchasing property and engaging with local professional networks. Residence demonstrates commitment and integration.

Close family members can be included, subject to the same compliance checks. A spouse and minor children are generally eligible, while dependent adult children or parents may qualify depending on circumstances.

Timeline and processing

The process begins with obtaining Maltese residence. This stage allows the applicant to establish a documented presence and start implementing elements of the planned contribution.

A central document in the procedure is the Proposal Letter. This structured submission outlines the applicant's background, achievements, and intended contribution to Malta. It explains how

the proposed activities align with national interests and provides supporting evidence. The Proposal Letter functions as a comprehensive case file rather than a simple form.

Malta conducts rigorous Due Diligence at several levels. Authorities examine personal history, business activities, financial background, and reputational risks. Independent checks verify the authenticity of documents and assess potential compliance concerns. This strict review safeguards Malta's international standing.

After Due Diligence, the case is evaluated on its merits. Authorities consider the scale, feasibility, and sustainability of the proposed contribution, as well as the strength of the applicant's integration. If approved, citizenship is granted by naturalisation and formalised through an oath of allegiance.

The overall timeline depends on the complexity of the case and the quality of preparation. Applications supported by clear documentation and a coherent strategy tend to progress more efficiently.

Who Malta citizenship by merit is for

Malta's merit-based route is designed for individuals whose work creates measurable value. Entrepreneurs capable of expanding strategic sectors or introducing innovation may find the framework suitable. Relocating part of an international business to Malta and building a skilled local workforce is one example of meaningful engagement.

Scientists and researchers contributing to areas such as technology, healthcare, or sustainability may also qualify, particularly when collaborating with Maltese institutions. Philanthropists with structured, long-term initiatives that address social needs can demonstrate exceptional contribution.

Cultural leaders and internationally recognised athletes may be considered when their activities enhance Malta's global visibility and development. The common factor across all categories is demonstrated impact rather than financial capacity alone.

This pathway is not intended for individuals seeking a rapid or passive solution. It requires planning, active involvement, and alignment with Malta's objectives. For high-net-worth individuals prepared to build a genuine and lasting connection with the country, it offers a structured and credible route to European citizenship.

About Immigrant Invest

Immigrant Invest is a consulting company specialising in residence and citizenship solutions. The team develops a contribution strategy aligned with Malta's priorities, prepares the Proposal Letter, and coordinates supporting documents. It also conducts preliminary Due Diligence

before submission to identify potential risks and ensure compliance with Maltese law.

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