



Italian Citizenship Service

Provided by the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce

Introduction, Benefits and Process



Did you know?



The 2020 edition of the Henley & Partners Passport Index ranked the Italian passport as the fourth most valuable passport available in the world. Through citizenship, you gain access to the 188 countries world wide open to Italian passport holders, visa-free!





Introducing the Italian Citizenship Service

The IACC is pleased to announce the launch of a new Italian Citizenship service in collaboration with Sustaining Member **Lorenzo Agnoloni, Esq., Studio Legale Notarile Agnoloni - International Law-Notary Firm**. Through this exciting new service, the IACC is able to provide its members and larger community with expert legal citizenship services.

With over 130 years of experience operating in the United States, providing services to American and Italian businesses, the IACC has the established know-how to help you and your family discover your heritage.

Dual citizenship (Italian and American) is one of the most powerful tools, and incredible privileges an individual may hold. A dual citizen is able to live and study abroad easily, and gain access to certain countries VISA-free. This means you may be able to travel, live, study, and retire where others cannot! The COVID-19 outbreak has made dual citizenship even more useful — in a world where many borders are closed to Americans, having a second passport means you may be able to travel where others cannot.



Our partner, Studio Legale Notarile Agnoloni International Law-Notary Firm

The Italian Citizenship Service is provided by the IACC in partnership with the Studio Legale Notarile Agnoloni International Law-Notary Firm. As a firm with over 25 years in the field, specializing in immigration law, civil and administrative law in Italy, it has the established experience to guide you through the citizenship process. The firm is an attorney member of the European and American Bar Associations. Mr. Agnoloni is a certified bar attorney permitted to practice in Italy, the European Union, Connecticut (CBA) and New York (NYSBA), is a member of the Board of Governors at CBA, and was recently nominated in the International Law section of CBA as Chair of the Human Rights Committee.

Studio Legale Notarile Agnoloni International Law-Notary Firm maintains a permanent presence in Italy via its Rome based office, and is certified as an Italian law firm through the relevant authorities to remotely carry out the necessary services in Italy from the U.S. in the citizenship application process. This unique qualification allows Mr. Agnoloni to file in all Italian courts and public offices electronically, which not many other U.S. based lawyers are able to do.

Studio Legale Notarile Agnoloni International Law-Notary Firm has handled dozens of successful citizenship petitions and immigration trials before the Court of Rome and the Regional Administrative Court of Lazio (T.A.R. Lazio) in Rome. This is a specific sector that not many lawyers have the experience to access. The firm can also assist in related matters such as taxation, real estate, health and social security, residency and retirement in Italy.





Premise



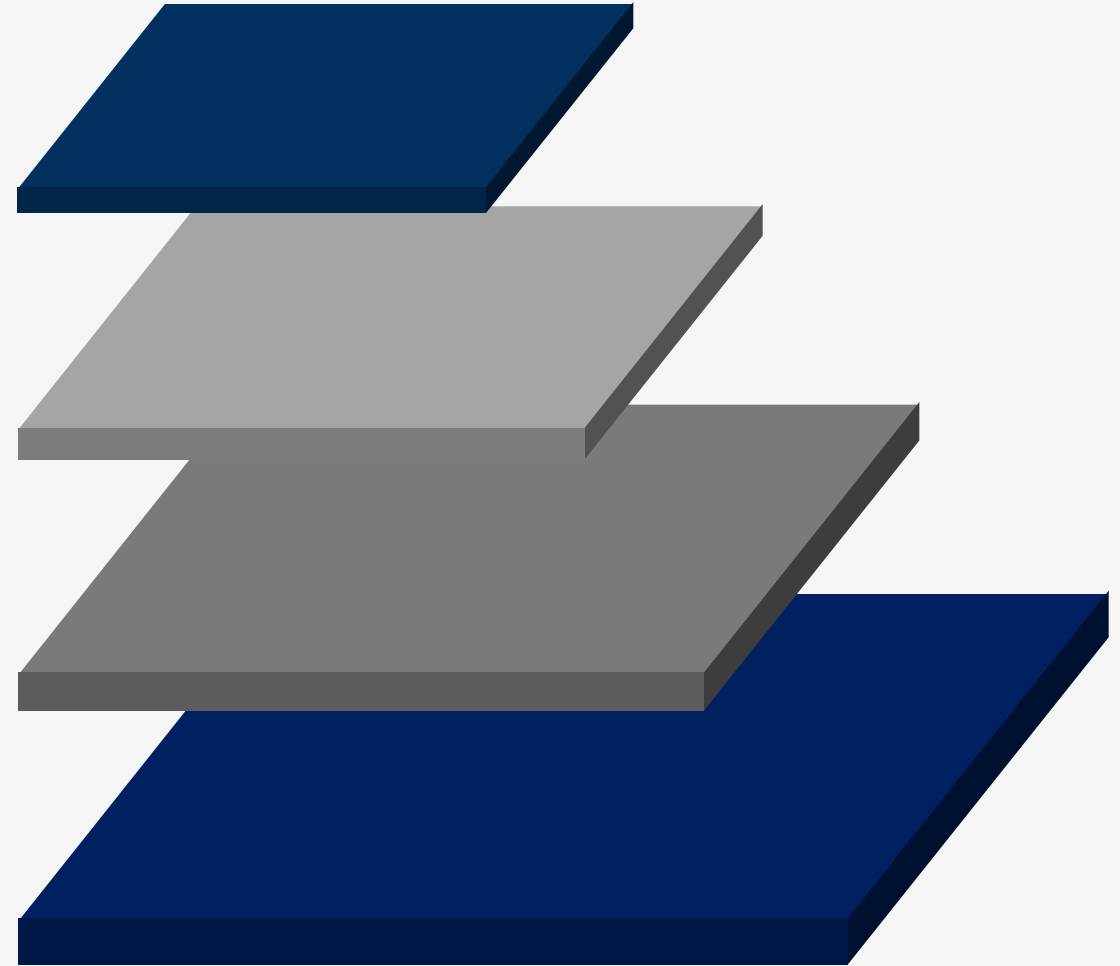
Among other ways, Italian citizenship is commonly acquired through ancestry and by the law of the bloodline

(jure sanguinis)



Dual citizenship benefits at a glance

- Ability to travel, work and live in 26 EU countries (Including: Austria, Belgium, The Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland) and possibility of using the priority fast track European lines in airports
- International employment benefits
- Education benefits. On average, the annual tuition fee and livings costs of EU universities for Italian/EU students is far less than American universities. For instance, Scottish universities like Edinburgh and St. Andrew's can cost about \$6,000/year, compared to annual American fees upwards of \$50,000
- Health and social care benefits such as welfare and emergency services
- Voting rights
- Retirement opportunities



What law regulates the acquisition of Italian citizenship?

National law no. 91 of February 5, 1992 regulates the different ways of obtaining or relinquishing Italian citizenship. Article 1 states that Italian citizenship is granted based on *jure sanguinis*, meaning that you are automatically an Italian citizen if your father or mother are Italian, no matter where you were born.

The principle of acquiring citizenship by descent goes as follows: **if you can prove that none of your ancestors ever formally waived their Italian citizenship (to acquire the citizenship of another country) you are theoretically able to claim your Italian blood as well.** To do so, any foreigner attempting to claim citizenship based on an Italian ancestor must go back in their ancestry to the family member who was born in Italy and find out when he or she left Italy.



What law regulates the acquisition of Italian citizenship? (continued)

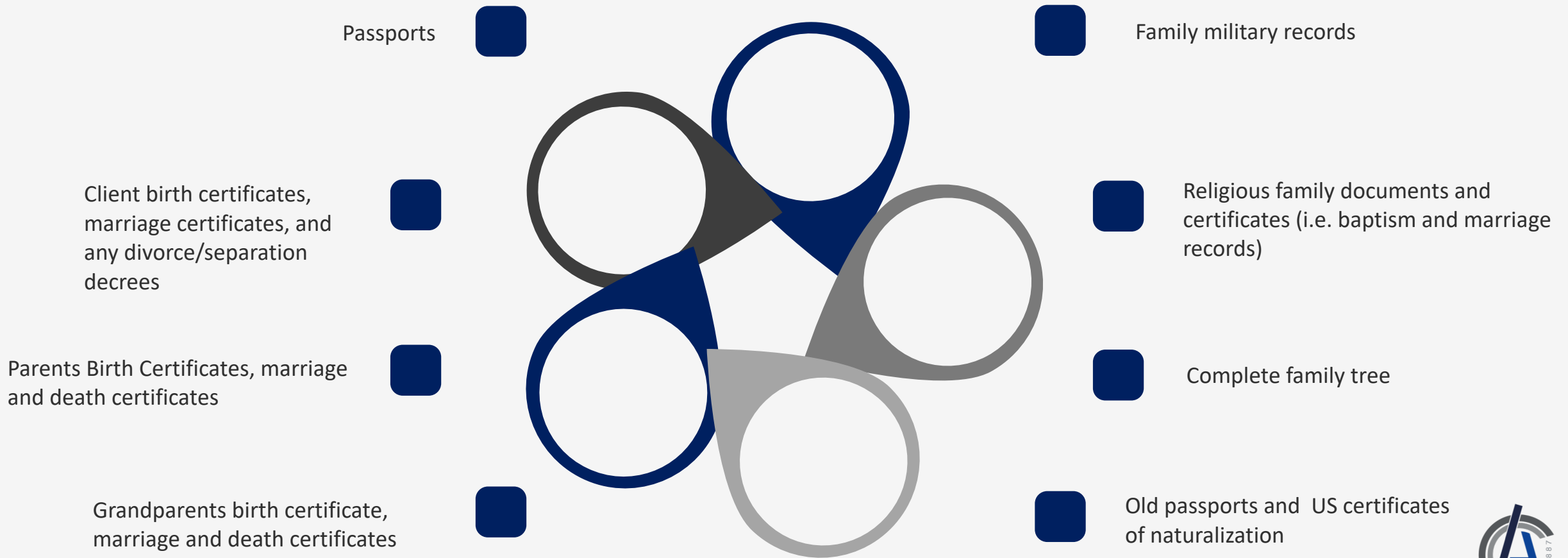
Many countries that have a legal system that allows for citizenship by descent, or that have a law of return, only allow for citizenship to be claimed only through the 1st or 2nd degree (Parents/Grandparents), while Italy has no generational limits on how far a person can go back to make a claim.

The only condition is that the ancestor of the petitioner must have lived in Italy after the formation of the modern unified Italian state (**March 17th, 1861**).

However, because some regions of Italy did not join the unified state until after World War I (such as Trentino and Alto Adige, which were a part of the Hapsburg Empire and of Austria) additional limitations do apply for families coming from affected areas. These limitations commonly include a date later than 1861 from which their last ancestor needed to have lived in Italy in order for them to be recognized as an Italian citizen.

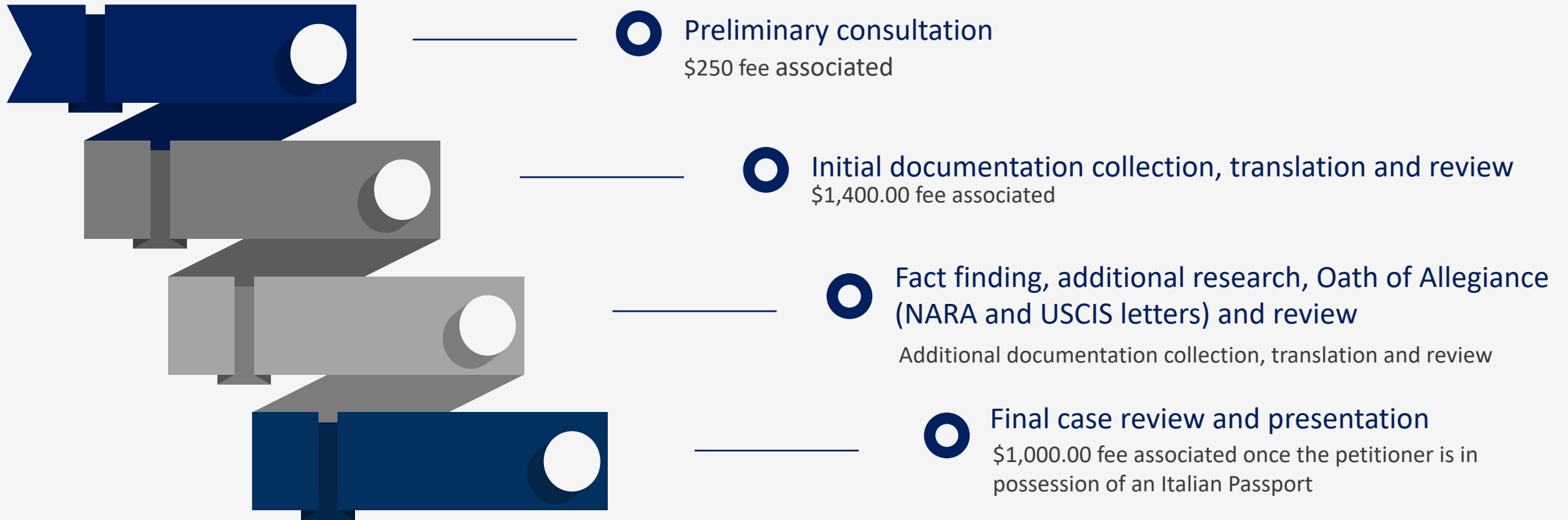


List of documents for potential clients



Sequence of events

Please be advised that the nature of a case can affect the order, duration, and cycle of this approximated overview.



The total application process can take up to two-years to complete. This timeline is based on the average duration of case processing. If there is a documented need for urgent processing, applications may be rushed for an additional fee of \$650.00



Among the group of people who are eligible for Italian citizenship, there are some who can only make a claim through a female ancestor who gave birth before January 1st, 1948. People who would be required to go through a female ancestor like this must go through a judicial process commonly called a **“1948 case”**.

After the Supreme Court of Italy (Corte di Cassazione, Judgement. # 4466 in February 25th, 2009) declared the law unconstitutional, there are no existing limitations to claiming Italian citizenship through a female ancestor. The process is done in front of the Civil Court of Rome with a expedited process through a lawyer admitted to practice in Italy.

What about restrictions related to the 1948 case?



Yes, a foreign citizen may claim Italian citizenship based on **marriage** between a man and a woman (Article 5) to an Italian citizen after two years of residing in Italy (one year if the couple has children), and after three years if residing abroad (18 months if there are children). A **de facto relationship**, which is a cohabitation agreement in legal terms, does not grant the right to a permit to stay for family reasons or the right to claim Italian citizenship.

If a foreign citizen enters into a [same-sex civil union](#) with an Italian citizen, which carries the legal weight of a traditional marriage, the foreigner may claim Italian citizenship based on marriage.

Are there other ways to obtain Italian citizenship?



Citizenship can be granted to foreigners who have legally resided in Italy for at least ten years, or to the citizen of an EU state if he or she has been legally residing in Italy for at least four years. Stateless persons or refugees can claim citizenship after residing legally in Italy for at least five years.

Article 9(a) provides a shortcut to citizenship, whereby a foreigner whose father, mother, or grandparent were Italian citizens by birth, and the applicant has legally resided in Italy for at least three years. If your grandparents were Italian (even if they waived or lost their Italian citizenship) and you are currently residing in Italy, you can submit the application after three years of legal and official **residency** in Italy.

Are there other way to
obtain Italian
citizenship?
(continued)



I have been reading that a new set of rules that have recently been approved. Is that so?

Towards the end of last year, a *circolare* (official public memo) was released by the Italian government stating a few changes for those who are interested in Italian citizenship through naturalization (i.e. through residency and *Jure Matrimonii*), not those eligible through *Jure Sanguinis* or able to make a “1948 case”.

The new updates mostly have to do with a new linguistic requirement, new minimum processing times and an update to the application fee.

A new linguistic requirement has been introduced: B1 level certification in the Italian language. In short, B1 is considered to be a higher level of proficiency in the Italian language and the exam (written and oral) is quite demanding, has a significant cost and requires a fair number of lessons.



Do I need a lawyer to petition for Italian citizenship?

No. However, due to the bureaucratic nature of the application and fact finding processes, it is very difficult to do without professional assistance. Mr. Agnoloni has worked closely with, and has a deep understanding of the process intricacies and documentation. By maintaining a permanent office presence in Rome since 1995, Mr. Agnoloni is able to acquire certified documents through the Italian public office, is able to access the different administrations online using the most advanced verification processes and ensure translation accuracy of all documents with Italian legal terms.

As the process of acquiring dual citizenship is time-intensive and costly by nature, added errors only prolong the process, costing the applicant time and unnecessary fees. The difference between a successful petition and a rejection could be one simple document.

The services provided by the IACC will build the strongest application possible and, if necessary, bring processes such as 1948 cases before the Civil Court of Rome (VI Section) or bring unfair/erroneous rejections before the Regional Administrative Court of Lazio (T.A.R. Lazio) in Rome, with jurisdiction over such cases.

The bottom line is, professional familiarity with the nuances of *Jure Sanguinis* is a great asset to every application.



Yes. In one case-example, Mr. Agnoloni helped some clients start the citizenship process, ultimately including 21 of their other relatives.

In another case-example, a woman in her 70's who had been married to a then deceased Italian citizen was interested in making a claim for Italian citizenship through marriage. She wasn't actually of Italian descent, but she loved Italy and solidifying her connection to the country was quite important to her. Because she had been married to her husband prior to 1983, she automatically qualified for Italian citizenship and was able to successfully complete her request through the Italian consulate in the United States.

Are there cases of
successful applications
that fall outside the
process outlined?



There are many benefits associated with Dual Citizenship, here are a few of the most important.

While an individual is able to reside in Italy and the European Union, the freedom of movement within the Schengen area without a visa is one of the most well known. Freedom of movement means that an individual is able to travel into a number of other countries in the European Economic Area and EU including Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

In addition to residence and employment opportunities across the European Union, there is a central set of protections set out by the European Commission for workers in Europe that include access to social benefits and welfare in the case of a work accident. This includes access to health care systems throughout Europe, which would allow an individual to travel around Europe with their healthcare card and retain access to emergency services. People who choose to reside in Italy get to take advantage of one of the best healthcare systems in the world! Not only is Italy able to boast high-quality health care, but in comparison to the United States, the costs are significantly less.

Having Italian Citizenship also can help you to get special pricing or discounts on education (High school, Universities and Graduate degree programs) throughout Italy, within the European Union and potentially entitle you to education and cultural activities related grants. Around the European Union, education costs are much lower than within the United States, and can differ dramatically if the student has Italian/European citizenship.

Being a citizen of Italy grants the right to vote in Italian elections, local and national. If you reside in Italy or another European Union country, you also have the ability to vote in European Union elections.

What are the Benefits of Dual Citizenship?





Are you interested in pursuing dual
Italian-American citizenship?

The IACC can help you!



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