



PROCEDURE OF PARTICIPATION IN IJF COMPETITIONS FOR THE ATHLETES WHO WANT TO REPRESENT ANOTHER COUNTRY

The Article 1.7 of the IJF Sport Organization Rules relating to changes of nationality provides that:

The athletes must be of the same nationality as the National Federation for which they have been entered for the competition. Persons appointed by the Executive Committee of the IJF shall verify the citizenship of the athletes. The evidence of citizenship shall be the production of a passport issued by the represented country.

In the following cases, procedures must be applied:

a) Where the competitions are being held in a country in which the residents do not hold passports while in that country.

b) Where there is a possible problem of “joint citizenship”, e.g. Puerto Rico an acceptable substitute for the passport will be a letter or certificate from the athlete’s National Olympic Committee (NOC) or, if there is no such body, from the National Sports Authority confirming the athlete’s residence in that country and the citizenship.

If a competitor has multiple citizenships, they may compete for only one country.

1.7.1 Change of Nationality

A competitor who has represented one country in:

- Olympic Games
- World Championships (senior, junior, cadet)
- Continental Championships (senior, junior, cadet)
- Regional Games and Multi-Sport Games (such as Pan American Games, African Games, European Games, Commonwealth Games, Mediterranean Games, Francophone Games, Youth Olympic Games)
- International Tournaments organised by the IJF (Grand Prix, Grand Slam, Masters) or under its auspices (continental open and cups)
- All competitions in the IJF calendar except veterans, kata, military*

and who has changed his nationality or acquired a new nationality may represent his new country provided that at least three years have passed since the athlete last represented his former country.

*Veterans, military and kata participants are excluded from this rule and can change without waiting the three-year period.

If the two National Federations (current country and new country) concerned agree, they may request the IJF to shorten the period of three years or even to cancel the duration completely (see Olympic Charter, Rule 41 and the Bye-law to Rule 41).

Thus, the IJF can’t shorten the three years’ period without written agreement from both National Federations concerned and the athlete having a valid passport for the new country.

Refer also to Section 3 WRL and IJF Ranking Events, 3.5 Additional Rules.

1.7.1.1 Change of Nationality for a period of less than three years

An athlete cannot represent a new National Federation without the approval of the IJF.

The request to shorten the three-year period shall be sent via email to the IJF General Secretariat (gs@ijf.org) and must include the following documents:

- Letter from the President of the National Federation (the current country) certifying the absence of objection to the change of the nationality of the concerned athlete.
- Letter from the President of the National Federation (the new country) authorising the athlete to represent them in international competitions.
- Letter from the athlete, who has already represented one country, giving evidence of their wish to represent their new National Federation.
- A copy of the athlete passport proving the nationality of the new country.

On receipt of a complete file the IJF General Secretary will examine it and send it out to the IJF Executive Committee for approval. If the majority of the IJF Executive Committee approves the request, the IJF General Secretary confirms the acceptance of the application to the concerned party, with both the current and new National Federations in copy. Any athlete disrespecting this rule may be subject to disciplinary measures.

1.7.1.2 Change of Nationality after a period of three years or longer

An athlete cannot represent a new National Federation without informing the IJF even if three years or longer have passed since the athlete competed for their previous National Federation.

The IJF must be informed officially by the new National Federation via email to both the IJF General Secretariat - gs@ijf.org and Registration Management - registration@ijf.org. This must be done also for veterans, military and kata participants.

The information must include the following documents:

- Letter from the President of the new National Federation (the new country) authorising the athlete to represent them in international competitions.
- Letter from the athlete, who has represented one country, giving evidence of their wish to represent their new National Federation.
- A copy of the athlete passport proving the nationality of the new country.

On receipt of a complete file the IJF General Secretary will examine it and send it out to the IJF Executive Committee for information. Any athlete disrespecting this rule may be subject to disciplinary measures.

1.7.2 Special Circumstances

For events organised by the IJF or under its auspices, the IJF Executive Committee, in order to protect the interest of the athlete, can authorise that the athlete can compete under the IJF flag for any reason (for example: non-official refugee status of the athlete, non-recognition of the NOC by the IOC, suspension of the National Federation etc.).

1.7.2.1. Athletes with an official refugee status

Judoka with an official refugee status, hosted by a country, can qualify themselves for IJF or continental union competitions through their host country national championships and consequently they will compete internationally under their host country flag. The National federation requests must be sent, with the official refugee status documents, to the IJF General Secretariat (gs@ijf.org). If the documents sent are compliant, the agreement will be automatically given by the IJF General Secretary following confirmation by the IJF President.

If there is a change in the status of the official refugee i.e. citizenship of a new country, return to their country of origin etc. The nationality change process must be followed.

For events organised by the IJF or under its auspices, the IJF Executive Committee can authorise that judoka with an official refugee status can compete under the IJF flag.

If there is a change in the status of the official refugee who competed under the IJF flag i.e. citizenship of a new country, return to their country of origin etc. the IJF Executive Committee would make a decision concerning the change of nationality and the world ranking points that the athlete has. All documents relating to the new status and change request must be submitted to the IJF General Secretariat at gs@ijf.org, within a deadline of at least 15 days prior to the closing date of registration for a certain event.

1.7.2.2 Junior and younger immigrants

Juniors (men and women under 21, age 15 to 20 years in the calendar year) and younger foreign judoka living in a host country can participate in their host country national Juniors and younger championships and thus qualify themselves for IJF or Continental Union Juniors and younger competitions. They can be registered, by the national federation of the host country, into IJF or Continental Unions juniors and younger competitions if they meet the following requirements:

- To prove their residency in the host country (at least 1 year).
- To prove the integration of their parents in the host country (at least 1 year).
- To prove their integration in the school or university system (at least 1 year).
- To prove their integration in a judo club of the host country, duly affiliated to the National Federation which is an IJF member.

If the National Federations of host countries wish to register these athletes, they must send their request each year to the IJF General Secretariat (gs@ijf.org), with the above-mentioned documents. Additionally, the National Federations shall also attach the agreement of the judoka and the authorisation of the parents/guardians, if minors.

The IJF will review the submitted documents and if deemed compliant, The IJF will approve the request and the General Secretary will send a certificate for the registration in Judobase.

In case of approval, the concerned judoka will compete under their host country flag.

Should the athlete wish to return to his country of origin, or should he change residence to another host country, he is free to do so and take any ranking points with him, upon submission of the documents proving the relocation to the IJF General Secretariat at gs@ijf.org. No change of nationality process required.