UNITED WORLD
WRESTLING

CHANGE OF NATIONALITY REGULATIONS

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Version November 2026

Introduction and definitions

Any wrestler[1] in a United World Wrestling (hereinafter "UWW") sanctioned event must be a national of the country of the National Federation which is entering such wrestler.

All matters relating to the determination of the country which a wrestler may represent in a UWW sanctioned event shall be resolved by the UWW Bureau.

For the purposes of these Rules, the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them below:

- **Host Federation:** The National Federation that applies to UWW for a change of nationality on behalf of a wrestler or referee, and with which the wrestler or referee intends to be licensed.
- **Releasing Federation**: The National Federation from which the wrestler or referee departs when applying for a change of nationality.
- **National Wrestler:** A wrestler who represents the National Federation of their original sports nationality and who has not changed nationality under these Rules.
- **Naturalized Wrestler:** A wrestler who has changed nationality under these regulations[2], in any version. Wrestlers licensed under Article 7 para. 3 let. b) or para. 4 are not naturalized wrestlers and are treated as national wrestlers for the purpose of Article 9.

Article 1 – General principles

In order to participate in a competition in the UWW calendar, a wrestler must hold the international athlete's license issued by UWW and valid for the current year.

This license determines the wrestler's nationality and thus the country he represents in international competitions.

Unless otherwise specified in these rules, any wrestler who has participated in a competition in the UWW calendar representing a country, and who intends to compete for another country, must undergo the nationality change procedure.

A wrestler has the possibility to change his nationality once during his career whatever the age and the wrestling style. In such case, and unless stated otherwise in the present rules, the new nationality is granted definitively and the wrestler who has changed his nationality may not return to his previous nationality.

Article 2 – Scope of application

Safe exceptions provided herein, the present regulations apply to wrestlers competing, or intending to compete:

a. In all age categories;
b. In all types of competitions under the authority of UWW (including without limitation: international tournaments, Ranking Series events, continental championships and cups, world championships and cups)

[1] The male pronoun is used for brevity in these rules but applies equally to wrestlers of all genders and styles.
[2] Wrestlers whose change of nationality was granted under an earlier version than the October 2024 version are not naturalized wrestlers once they hold a valid passport of their new country, and are then treated as national wrestlers for the purpose of Article 9.

c. In all Wrestling styles and disciplines under the authority of UWW.

For Olympic Games, the rules of the Olympic Charter apply.

For competitions under the authority of major events organizations (Continental Games, Multisport Games, or other and qualifying tournaments for these competitions), the rules of the organizer apply.

The principles described in these regulations do not apply to international transfers of wrestlers between clubs for interclub competitions for which an authorization is granted temporarily by UWW or a continental council, without change of nationality.

Article 3 – Limitations on nationality changes

In order to prevent any abuse, a Host Federation may receive only one (1) foreign wrestler who applies for a change of nationality per gender per year across all age categories.

Any Releasing Federation can allow a maximum of three (3) males and three (3) female changes of nationality, per year, across all styles and all age categories. This decision rests solely with the Releasing Federation, at its full discretion. United World Wrestling shall not be involved in, nor responsible for, any such decision, which shall not give rise to any legal action or claim against UWW.

Article 4 – Conditions for Competing under a new nationality

1. A wrestler who is a national of two or more countries at the same time may represent either one of them, as he may elect. However, after having represented one country in a competition under the authority of UWW as defined in article 2, or in Olympic, Continental or Regional Games, a wrestler may not represent another country unless he meets the conditions set forth below .

2. A wrestler who has represented one country in any competition under the authority of UWW as defined in article 2, or in Olympic, Continental or Regional games, and who has changed his nationality or acquired a new nationality, may participate in any competition under the authority of UWW to represent his new country provided that at least three (3) years have passed since the wrestler last represented his former country in Continental or World Championships, Ranking Series, Cups, or in Olympic, Continental or Regional Games.

3. This period may be reduced or even cancelled, with the agreement of the Host and Releasing Federations concerned, by the UWW Bureau, which takes into account the circumstances of each case. For 15 year old wrestlers at the time of the application or for wrestlers whose only participation with the Releasing Federation was in U15, this decision to reduce or cancel the period may be taken by the UWW Administration, with the agreement of the Host and Releasing Federations concerned.

4. If an associated State, province or overseas department, a country or colony acquires independence, if a country becomes incorporated within another country by reason of a change of border, if a country merges with another country, or if a new National Federation is recognised by UWW, a wrestler may continue to represent the country to which he belongs or belonged. However, he may, if he prefers, elect to represent his country or be entered in a competition under the authority of UWW by his new National Federation if one exists. This particular choice may be made only once.

5. Furthermore, in all cases in which a wrestler would be eligible to participate in a competition under the authority of UWW, either by representing another country than his or by having the choice as to

the country which such wrestler intends to represent, UWW Bureau may take all decisions of a general or individual nature with regard to issues resulting from nationality, citizenship, domicile or residence of any wrestler, including the duration of any waiting period.

Article 5 – Procedure for applying for a change of nationality

1. The National Federation of a wrestler who intends to change his/her nationality shall send a request in writing to UWW.

2. Applications may only be submitted during the period between 1 October and 20 December of each year. The authorization for the change of nationality, if granted, shall take effect on 1 January of the following year.

3. The application must include the following documents (each with an official English translation):

    a) Official attestation by the Releasing Federation (signed by its president, on a letter with official header and seal) agreeing with the applicant's change of nationality.

    b) Official application by the Host Federation (signed by its president, on a letter with official header and seal) seeking the wrestler's change of nationality.

    c) Copy of the wrestler's original passport corresponding to the nationality waived.

    d) Copy of wrestler's new passport corresponding to the nationality being acquired.

    e) Proof of payment to UWW of the fee for the change of nationality set in accordance with article 6 (Training compensation).

4. An application is considered as complete when documents a) to d) above have all been submitted to, and received by the UWW Administration.

5. For changes of nationality in Veterans, the application may be submitted anytime during the year, but minimum 45 days before the Veteran World Championship or any other event in this age category. Only the request from the host federation and the agreement by the releasing federation will be required. Article 3 and 9 of these regulations do not apply to veterans. The three year rule does not apply to veterans.

6. UWW's authorization for the change of nationality shall be sent to the Host Federation with copy to the Releasing Federation.

7. UWW has 90 days from the receipt of the complete application to finalize the procedure.

Article 6 – Training compensation and administration fee

When an application for a change of nationality is submitted by any wrestler referred in the scale hereunder, the Releasing Federation may ask for a training compensation to the Host Federation according to it. It must obligatorily inform UWW when such a compensation is requested.

This compensation may only be requested for wrestlers in the U17[3], U20, U23 and Senior age category at the time of the application.

A wrestler who has been granted a change of nationality in the Veterans category may only compete in this age category. Should he participate in a senior event, the compensation will be due and all other rules applicable to a change of nationality as a Senior wrestler (including quotas for nationality changes) will be enforced.

To determine the compensation, all results obtained in all age categories will be taken into account.

Whether a training compensation has been requested or not according to paragraph 1 of the present article, 10% of the compensation amount calculated according to the scale here below will be automatically invoiced by UWW to the host federation. A minimum fee of 10'000.- Swiss Francs will be due to UWW. For changes in the Veterans category, a 500 Swiss Francs administration fee will be charged to the Host Federation.

Scale (only best result considered):

- Olympic & Senior World gold medalist — Swiss Francs 300'000.-
- Olympic & Senior World silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 200'000.-
- Senior Continental championship gold medalist — Swiss Francs 100'000.-
- Senior Continental championship silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 50'000.-
- U23 World gold medalist — Swiss Francs 300'000.-
- U23 World silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 200'000.-
- U23 Continental championship gold medalist — Swiss Francs 100'000.-
- U23 Continental championship silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 50'000.-
- U20 World gold medalist — Swiss Francs 210'000.-
- U20 World silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 140'000.-
- U20 Continental championship gold medalist — Swiss Francs 70'000.-
- U20 Continental championship silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 35'000.-
- U17 World gold medalist — Swiss Francs 150'000.-
- U17 World silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 100'000.-
- U17 Continental championship gold medalist — Swiss Francs 50'000.-
- U17 Continental championship silver or bronze medalist — Swiss Francs 25'000.-
- Senior, U23, U20 or U17 World Team member for another NF — Swiss Francs 25'000.-
- Senior, U23, U20 or U17 Continental Team member for another NF — Swiss Francs 20'000.-
- International license for another NF (except U15 licenses) — Swiss Francs 15'000.-
- National license[4] for another NF (minimum of 3 years of the past 5) — Swiss Francs 10'000.-

Article 7 – First-time license applications with dual nationality

1. A wrestler who holds two or more nationalities at the time of applying for a UWW international license for the first time may obtain the license for only one nationality of their choice.

[3] Exception: no compensation fee will due for nationality changes of wrestlers of 15 years old at the time of application or if past participation for the former federation took place in U15 only.
[4] Or any official equivalent system. In case a National Federation does not have a licensing system, the participation by the athlete in three competitions sanctioned by another NF in the past 5 years shall be considered as equivalent.

2. These cases of dual nationality typically arise when the country shown as the place of birth in the wrestler's passport is different from the country that issued the passport.

3. If the wrestler has already held a national license with one National Federation for a minimum of three (3) years within the past five (5) years, and seeks to obtain the UWW international license for another nationality, the wrestler must provide either:

   - A valid and recognized proof of habitual residence[5] in the country of the chosen nationality, or
   - A proof that the chosen nationality was held at birth or acquired before the age of ten[6] (10).

   a) If neither of these conditions is fulfilled, the case shall be treated as a change of nationality under these regulations.

   b) If at least one of these conditions is fulfilled, the application shall not be considered in the quota of nationality changes. However, in this case, the Releasing Federation is entitled to claim training compensation according to the scale set out in Article 6.

4. If the wrestler has never held a national license for a minimum of three (3) years within the past five (5), the issuance of a UWW international license for any of their nationalities shall not be considered as a change of nationality. The application will not affect nationality change quotas or compensation provisions.

5. For applying wrestlers aged 13, 14 or 15 years with dual nationality, only the new passport and a proof of residence in the country of the chosen nationality are required. No authorization from the Releasing Federation and no compensation shall be applied.

Article 8 – Objection to a change of nationality by a Releasing federation

In case the Releasing federation objects for any reason to a wrestler's or referee's change of sports nationality (to be confirmed in writing), the change may still be granted upon decision by the Bureau on an exceptional basis, provided that all other conditions (without limitation: three-year non representation period, limitations to host and releasing federations, competition quotas, training and administration fee) are met.

Article 9 – Participation in competition

In order to prevent any abuse, the following participation rules shall be observed strictly:

1. For the years 2025 and 2026, a country may only participate in Continental and World Championships with a maximum of two (2) naturalized wrestlers, providing they enter at least the same number of national wrestlers, per style, per age category and per event[7].

[5] Proof of habitual residence: an official document issued by the local city council or, where no such document is issued, by another competent public authority (where such documents cannot reasonably be obtained, other equivalent evidence may be accepted), and a second supporting document, such as tax residency certificate, educational record, employment documentation or other evidence of sustained physical presence (utility bill , insurance document, etc.).
[6] In accordance with the domestic law of the country concerned and evidenced by an official attestation from the national competent authority.
[7] Example:

2. For the years 2027 and 2028, a country may only participate in Continental and World Championships with a maximum of two (2) naturalized wrestlers, providing they enter at least two (2) times the number of national wrestlers, per style, per age category and per event[8].

3. For the year 2029 and following years, a country may only participate in Continental, World Championships and Ranking Series events, with a maximum of one (1) naturalized wrestler, providing they enter at least four (4) times the number of national wrestlers, per style, per age category and per event.

4. For the LA28 Olympic qualification cycle (2027 and 2028), a national federation may designate a maximum of two (2) naturalized wrestlers per style for the entirety of this cycle. The designation shall be made in writing by the national federation to UWW before the start of the first event forming part of the qualifying system and shall be binding for its entirety. Only those designated athletes may compete in any event forming part of the Olympic qualification system (2027 Ranking Series, 2027 Senior Continental Championships and Games*, 2027 Senior World Championship, 2028 Ranking Series, 2028 Senior Continental Championships and Games*, 2028 Continental Qualification tournaments, 2028 World Qualification tournament). This restriction constitutes an eligibility condition and, in the event of a breach, the athlete shall not be permitted to participate. Any result achieved in breach of this condition shall be subject to disqualification in accordance with UWW's applicable disciplinary framework. This restriction applies solely to the categories of competition covered by Article 9 and is without prejudice to the exceptions expressly provided under Article 5 para. 5 of these Regulations, including in particular the Veterans category.
   At the Senior Continental and World Championships, paragraph 2 and the present paragraph apply cumulatively: only the designated naturalized wrestlers may be entered, within the limits and conditions of paragraph 2.

   * If added to the ranking events.

5. For the year 2029 and following years, a country may only participate in any Olympic qualification event with a maximum of one (1) naturalized wrestler, per style and considering all Olympic qualification events.

Article 10 - Change of nationality for Referees

As for wrestlers, applications for nationality changes for referees (all levels) must be submitted by the National Federations. Referees may change nationality only once. Unlike as applied for wrestlers, they may be submitted to UWW anytime during the year, but at least 45 days before a planned competition. The change shall be effective immediately.

The following rules apply for referees:

- Senior World Championship: if 2 *naturalized* GR wrestlers are entered by a National Federation, 2 *national* GR wrestlers shall also be entered by this National Federation;
- U17 Asian Championship: if 1 naturalized FS wrestler is entered by a National Federation, 1 *national* FS wrestler shall also be entered by this National Federation.

[8] Example:
- Senior World Championship: if 2 *naturalized* WW wrestlers are entered by a National Federation, 4 *national* WW wrestlers shall also be entered by this National Federation;
- U20 Pan-American Championship: if 1 *naturalized* FS wrestler is entered by a National Federation, 2 *national* FS wrestlers shall also be entered by this National Federation.

1. Official application by the Host federation (signed by its president, on a letter with official header and seal) seeking the Referee's change of nationality;

2. Official confirmation by the Releasing federation (signed by its president, on a letter with official header and seal) agreeing with the applicant's change of nationality;

3. Mandatory copy of the Referee's passport of the new country and proof of residence in the new country;

4. Proof of payment to United World Wrestling of the administrative fee of 1'500 Swiss Francs;

5. Proof of payment to the Releasing federation of a solidarity fee for education costs of 2'500 Swiss Francs.

For referees with double passport, the above rules apply if a licence is taken for the other country.

To be eligible for the Olympic Games, a Referee who has changed his nationality shall observe a three-year waiting period since the last competition as a referee for the former country.

UWW shall implement an internal process to ensure the Refereeing Commission is informed of any change of nationality to avoid assignments in matches involving Athletes of their former country.

Article 11 – Disputes

In case of a dispute regarding the application of these regulations, the UWW Secretary General shall settle the dispute, or choose to refer the matter to the Bureau.

Any proceedings of dispute settlement regarding a change of nationality may be accompanied by the suspensive effect against the applicant wrestler.

Article 12 – Appeals

The Secretary General or Bureau's decision (article 11) may be subject to a complaint in accordance with the complaint procedure described in the *Disciplinary Procedure and Dispute Resolution Regulations*.

Article 13 – Persons entitled to appeal

The national federations and the wrestlers directly concerned by the Secretary General or Bureau decision may appeal. The appealed decision may be upheld, quashed, or modified.

Article 14 – Deadline to appeal

The deadline to appeal is 21 days. It starts from the day the appealed decision has been notified to the parties by the United World Wrestling Administration.

Article 15 – Revocation and annulment of a change of nationality

Once the authorization for a change of nationality is granted by UWW, no revocation for any reason (doping case, illness, injury, change of style or age category, etc.) may be granted by United World Wrestling.

However, an annulment may be pronounced for cases of deception in the conditions for granting the nationality.

Article 16 – Transitory provisions and special situations

1. All the wrestlers that have a certain nationality, but do not fully comply with the terms of these regulations can maintain their sports nationality, under the current terms, until the 31st of December 2026. After the 1st of January 2027 they can only represent a country when in full compliance with these International Rules for the Change of Nationality, as all other wrestlers.

2. The wrestlers that are referred to in article 16 para.1, in the situations that they do not get a passport from their current sports nationality, may represent their original country, providing they possess a passport of such country and they comply with all the other rules concerning the obtention of a UWW international license, without having to pay any additional fees for returning to their country of origin. Any paid compensation fee or paid UWW fee shall not be refunded. The return to the country of origin as per this article is final.

3. An individual may only represent one country per year. If one individual already represented one country in a competition under the authority of UWW, such as Continental, World Championships, or Ranking Series event, or at the Olympic Games, continental or regional games, he may not represent another country during that season.

Article 17 – Other disputes

All situations not provided in the present rules may be settled definitively by the UWW Bureau.

Article 18 – Entry into force

The present rules enter into force on 5 November 2026.

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