



24 February 2021

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Dear Jeanette

**Official Information Act 1982 request 2021-0410**

I refer to your request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 27 January 2021. This response is provided to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested—

*- the total number of New Zealand citizenship applications made in the last three years that were successful.*

*- the average length of time taken to process the successful New Zealand citizenship applications for the last three years (if three years cannot be provided, can this be supplied for the last six months?).*

*- I note that the New Zealand Immigration website states citizenship applications take between seven and 12 months to process, has this been the case for the last three years? Or has the timeframe been extended, and if so, when?*

Before we provide you with the information requested, it is important to note the following:

- The timeframe for this data is from 1 January 2018 to 31 January 2021.
- “Successful New Zealand citizenship applications” are those which have been approved for citizenship by grant by the Minister. Not all approved applicants would necessarily have been granted citizenship yet as some would still be waiting for a ceremony, which can take between three to five months after approval.
- As you have quoted New Zealand Immigration in your third point, we have referred to our New Zealand Citizenship website regarding the processing timeframe as we do not oversee matters relating to Immigration New Zealand.
- “Time taken to process” is the number of days between the date the application was submitted with payment received and when the application was approved by the Minister.
- We have only counted working days and we do not take into account public holidays.

## Response


1. From 1 January 2018 to 31 January 2021, 85,316 applications were approved for citizenship by grant. The annual numbers can be found in the table below in response to question 2.
2. The table below covers the information requested over the last three years:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Total citizenship by grant applications approved</b>	<b>Average number of working days to process</b>
2018	32,288	27
2019	31,717	38
2020	20,492	90
2021	819	127
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,316</b>	<b>47</b>

3. The messaging on the govt.nz website at <https://www.govt.nz/browse/passports-citizenship-and-identity/nz-citizenship/how-to-apply-for-nz-citizenship/after-you-apply-for-nz-citizenship/> was updated in early December 2020 from "It takes 5 to 10 months to find out if your application is approved" to "It takes 7 to 12 months to find out if your application is approved".

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



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