



TAG/TRIP/4  
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**TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON TRAVELLER IDENTIFICATION PROGRAMME  
(TAG/TRIP/4)**

**FOURTH MEETING OF THE TAG/TRIP**

**ICAO HQ Montréal, 11-13 October 2023**

**USE OF NATIONALITY/CITIZENSHIP CODE IN PASSPORTS**

**Introduction**

ICAO has a long standing dialogue with public authorities and civil society groups in Uruguay concerning cases where Uruguayan passports are issued to individuals where the nationality codes, both in the VIZ and MRZ, do not match the issuing State code (URU) but report the holder's country of birth or other/previous nationality.

In Spanish the use of nationality (nacionalidad) has a different connotation than citizenship (ciudadania). It is noteworthy that Uruguayan law differentiates between a Uruguayan born citizen and a naturalized Uruguayan citizen, called legal citizen. Uruguayan legal citizens are issued with a Uruguayan passport reporting the individual's country of birth or other previous nationality.

**Uruguay Proposals to revise Doc 9303**

**1. Spanish Edition, Doc 9303, Part 3 Section 7.1 should use citizenship (ciudadania) only.**

ICAO consulted the Language Department and the fact that the word "citizenship" was translated as "nacionalidad" in the Spanish version of Doc 9303, Part 3 is a result of striving for terminological consistency and adherence to natural word usage (i.e. choosing the word that is most commonly and generally used in a given context). TAG/TRIP experts proposed to correct the Spanish version of Doc 9303 by translating citizenship as "ciudadania".

**2. As an alternative it is suggested that ICAO explore the possibility of changing the data field title in the VIZ from nationality to nationality/citizenship.**

Although it appears that throughout Doc 9303 the terminology "nationality" is used interchangeably with "citizenship" NTWG experts would need to analyze this request in more detail and respond to ICAO whether this is possible or not.

**3. Prior to translation into Spanish, clarify that English version Doc 9303 is the official version of the specifications when linguistic differences arise.**

Since its inception the drafting of Doc 9303 has taken place in English and thereafter translated into the other ICAO languages, with the understanding that English is the main language for technical specifications. All working group meetings and drafting of Technical Reports leading to amendments of Doc 9303 are in English language.

**4. ICAO to clarify that ordinary passports use the same code for the Issuing State as Nationality/Citizenship in the MRZ**

ICAO Doc 9303 permits the nationality code of the passport holder to be different from that of the issuing State code, per Part 3, Section 4.7 Representation of Issuing State or Organization and Nationality of Holder.

**Conclusion**

Doc 9303, Part 3, Section 7.1 Operational Experience notes deviations affecting large numbers of MRTDs that might be reported so as to assist borders in making a determination on whether travel documents are valid, forged or the product of a substitution.

In this context, Doc 9303-3, Section 7.1 notes:

- “MRZ citizenship incorrectly reports the country of birth rather than citizenship.”

While this is not a technical error, issuing an ordinary passport with a nationality code that is different than the issuing code will often result in that passport not being accepted for travel, not being accepted for entry into foreign States.

**Way Forward**

- The guidance in Section 7.1 is contradictory. From a technical perspective an MRZ with separate codes for state of issuance and nationality of the holder is technically correct. However, this situation results in problems at the border and lack of travel facilitation for the holder as the document might not be recognized for entry/admission into foreign States.
- The NTWG is requested to analyze this contradiction.